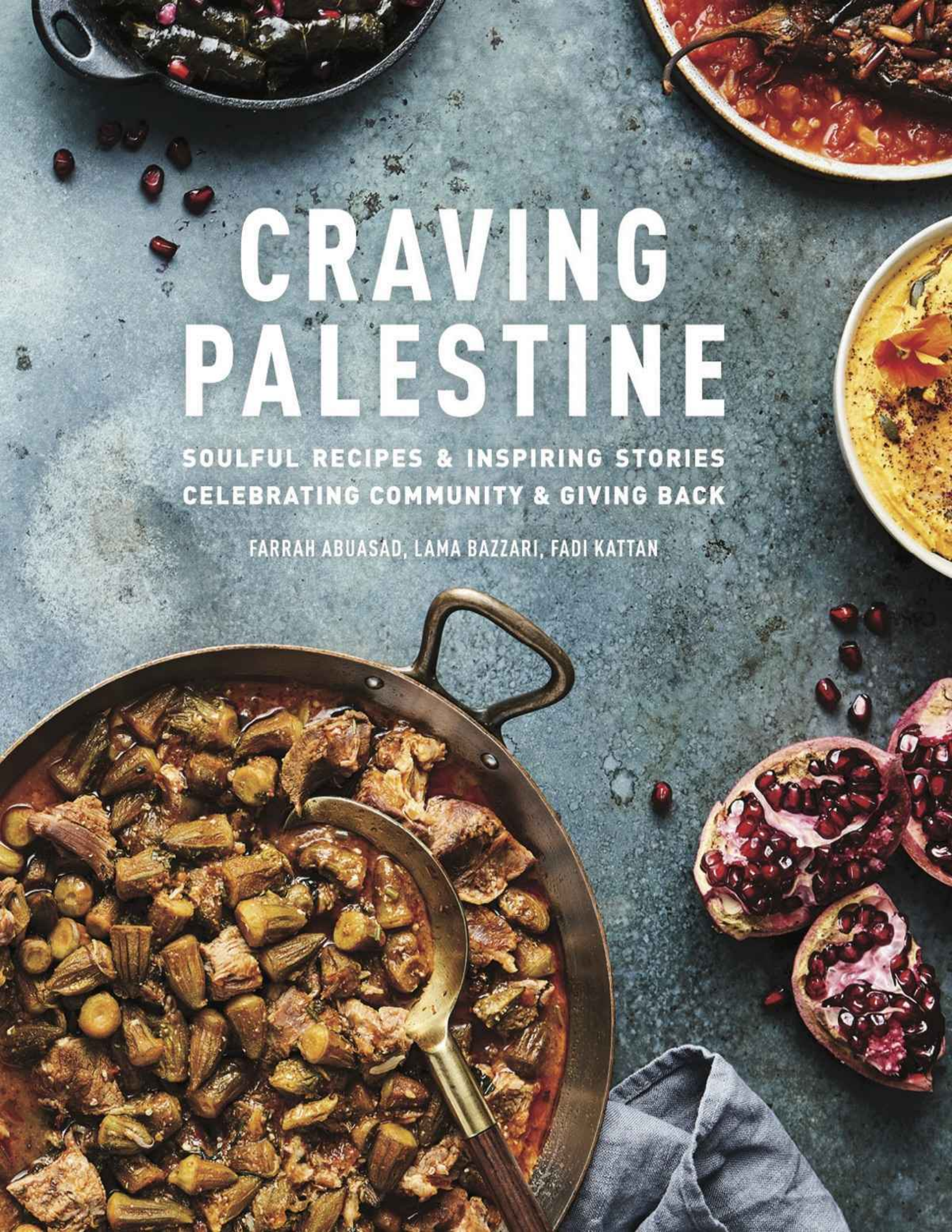
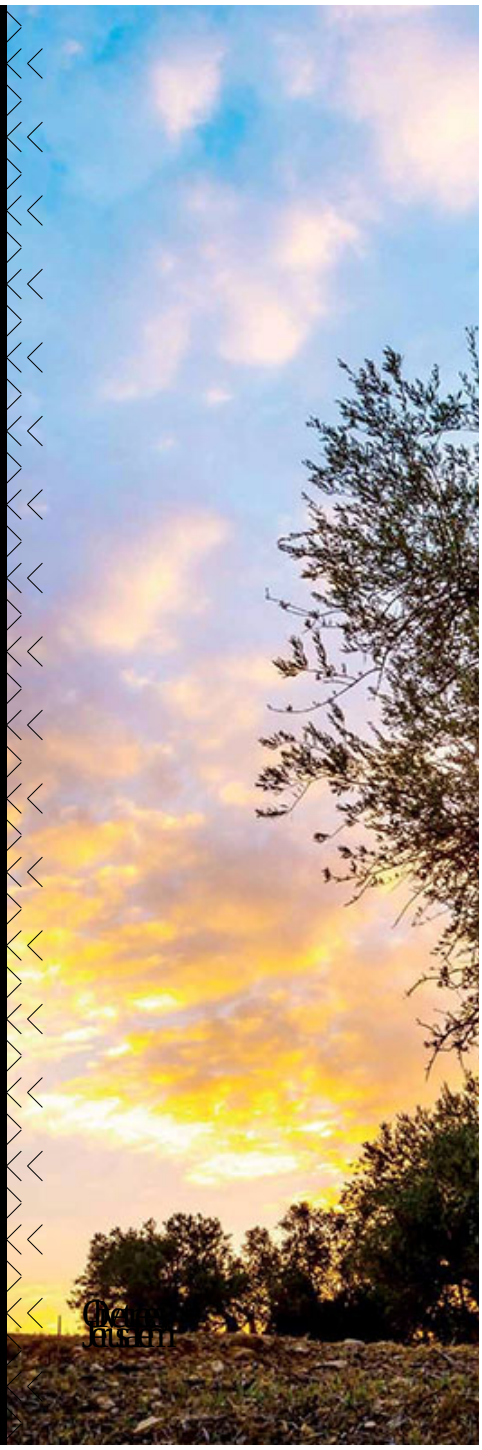
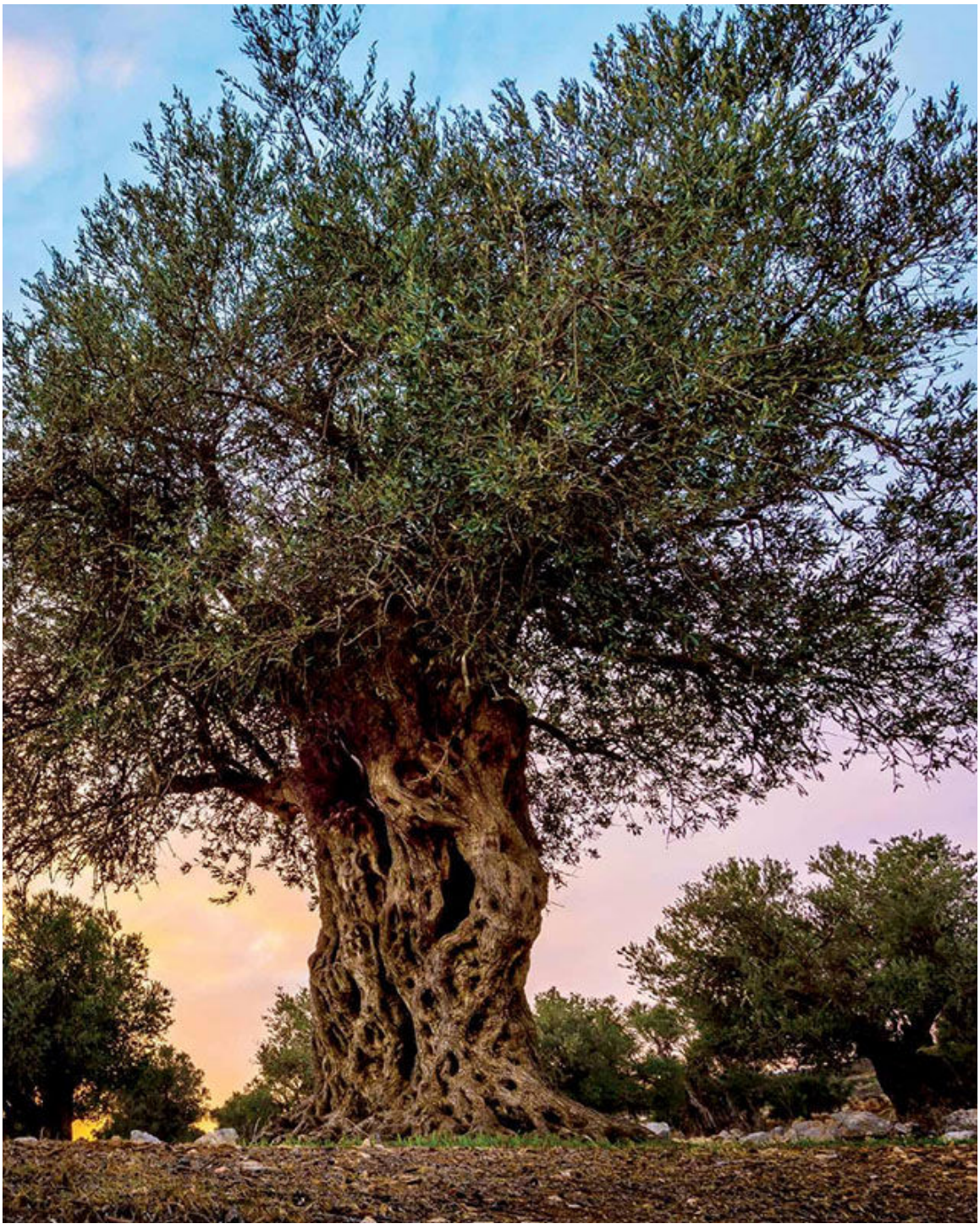

CRAVING
PALESTINE
SOULFUL RECIPES & INSPIRING STORIES
CELEBRATING COMMUNITY & GIVING BACK
FARRAH ABUASAD, LAMA BAZZARI, FADI KATTAN





CRAVING PALESTINE

Soulful Recipes and Inspiring Stories
Celebrating Community and Giving Back

Farrah Abuasad, Lama Bazzari, Fadi Kattan

STORY FARM

WINTER PARK • MIAMI
SANTA BARBARA

We dedicate this book to our beloved homeland Palestine and its youth and families who continue to reside across refugee camps in Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon for more than seven decades. We hope for opportunities, peace, and prosperity for our treasured Palestine and for its warm and hospitable people.

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Introduction

Craving Palestine is a global fundraising movement and a not-for-profit recipe book showcasing over 100 beautifully curated recipes graciously donated by inspirational Palestinians from all walks of life, all of whom have come together in their love for food, poetry, and giving. Full proceeds of book sales will go towards education, development, and health programs that benefit Palestinian communities across Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan, offering hope and opportunities where they are needed most.

The book's contributors come from far and wide, characteristic of the Palestinian diaspora, ranging from the rainforests of Chile to the farms of Jenin, to the coast of Gaza and across the landscapes of the Americas. Craving Palestine gets to the heart of the relationship between food and identity, and depicts a very diverse community, one that includes actors, entrepreneurs, artists, writers, chefs, and even a US congresswoman, and includes recipe dedications in memory of Palestinian literary giants Edward Said and Mahmoud Darwish.

Through the voices and tales of each contributor, you can travel through Palestine—from the coast of Gaza to the fertile lands of Jericho, from the hilltops of Nablus, through the century's old markets of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, to the vast farmlands of Jenin and Hebron. Interwoven throughout are recipes led with aromatic ingredients that come to life in your kitchen. Discover each region's unique and distinct flavors as diverse as our landscape and the civilizations that have passed through and greatly influenced its cuisine.

The recipes include traditional classics, passed down through generations, and innovative modern reinterpretations on Palestinian favorites. They include everyday dishes, holiday feasts and mouthwatering desserts meant to be relished with family and friends.

The Craving Palestine global fundraising movement is the brainchild of a daughter (an avid poet and writer) and mother—an entrepreneur and philanthropist duo seeking to raise awareness and funds for the decades-long Palestinian humanitarian disaster. Together they hope to connect people through food and a Palestinian narrative beautifully conveyed through each contributor's story and recipe, showcasing how Palestinians are able to not only succeed but also thrive when given the chance. The end result is a global Craving Palestine community that has come together to offer opportunities to Palestinian youth, bound by love and a shared humanity to make a far-reaching impact.

We hope you enjoy cooking and sharing these delightful recipes and the stories behind them. We hope you are inspired to visit our treasured homeland Palestine, and join us at a future supper club. May this book touch the lives of the many Palestinian youth deserving a bright future.

—Farrah Abuasad, Lama Bazzari Founders, Craving Palestine

Foreword

When I was approached by Lama to get involved in this community-driven recipe book, I was ecstatic. Living in Bethlehem, cooking and fighting to preserve our produce, our farmers, and our heritage, I embraced the initiative of having Palestinians from all walks of life gather around this book.

Discovering the recipes, the stories behind them, and the great people of Palestine has underlined my conviction that our food will never disappear. As long as there is a fire (or a stove) burning somewhere, Palestinians will preserve our cuisine and be united around a table. Our cuisine, in Palestine and in the diaspora, brings back memories of Palestine and awakens a deep sense of belonging and home.

In authenticating these recipes, I learned that sometimes even the same dish is not made the same way from family to family. "No, that is not how we do makloubeh!" they say. This is our diversity; there is no recipe that is holy but each family recipe is holy. Each family has a recipe from a mother, father, grandmother, or grandfather that is special to them. The rich diversity of history and terroir are reflected in our cuisine. For example, some produce and recipes you find in the north will not be used in a southern kitchen and vice versa. The once abundant seafood of Gaza, Jaffa, and Akka marked the coastal cuisine with a very profound sea culture while the exquisite Awassi lamb from the center of the country marked the hilltops of Palestine's olive terraces.

Since the beginning of humanity, our country has been a crossroad to civilizations either living here or passing through, and all those civilizations have left something in our cuisine. Our food shares certain similarities with Ottoman food, with Roman influences, with influences from the Arab peninsula and from Europe. At the same time, being a center of religious and spiritual thought, many people came as pilgrims or seekers, and stayed, also influencing our cuisine. You will find in Palestinian cuisine influences of the Armenians, the Ethiopians, and the Assyrians.

Craving Palestine is meant to showcase our beautiful cuisine, and our hope is that people worldwide enjoy and share these recipes with their family and friends and truly experience a taste of our beautiful Palestine.

—Fadi Kattan Chef, Hotelier

A Message from Anera

Brought to you by Palestinians who are well-known inside and outside of Palestine, the recipes in Craving Palestine make for delicious, mouth-watering dishes and nostalgia-inducing meals. Maybe you left Palestine as a child and have been denied your return. Or perhaps you travel back every summer to see family. Or maybe you have no connection to the region and are entirely new to Palestinian cuisine. Regardless, we welcome you all to enjoy this cookbook's delights with us.

The contributors in the pages that follow have their own stories, and their struggles and successes remind us we want more—crave more—for Palestinians everywhere, especially those living in impoverished conditions in Gaza, Jerusalem, the West Bank, and refugee camps in the neighboring countries of Jordan and Lebanon. Your support goes directly to them.

I want to thank all the Craving Palestine contributors and every one who has worked on this beautiful appetite-building book – especially Farrah Abuasad for the idea and poetry and Lama Bazzari for her leadership, inspiration and style.

Shukran wa Sahtain!

—Sean C. Carroll
Anera President and CEO

Anera's Work in Palestine

We all have seen the ways conflict and displacement fragment life for refugees and others in the Middle East. In 1968, a small group of concerned Americans came together and founded Anera to respond to the Palestinian refugee crisis in the wake of the 1967 war and in aid of displaced Palestinian refugees, working tirelessly to provide long-term support to communities through its on-the-ground staff, navigating the politics that constrict progress to get help where it's needed most.

In just the past few years alone, Anera supporters

- brought 18,718 youth—mostly Palestinian and Syrian refugees—back into the classroom and trained another 18,299 for the job market in Lebanon.
- helped 609 Gaza farming families wisely use limited resources to produce plentiful, profitable harvests.
- built or renovated 24 of Palestine's preschools to nurture and stimulate young, growing minds.
- reacted quickly in every emergency—from harsh winter conditions in Lebanon's refugee tent camps to attacks on protesters in Gaza—to save and sustain lives.

Book Proceeds

Your purchase of Craving Palestine raises funds to help Anera continue delivering impactful programs in Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan. The book's proceeds will support Anera's:

- EDUCATION PROGRAMS, like those that educate preschoolers and their parents about holistic care, from good foods to active play, or vocational training courses that teach useful skills to burgeoning bakers.
- DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, like those that train family farmers how to keep their land healthy and productive or build community centers where women's cooperatives can make food products to sell for income.
- HEALTH PROGRAMS, like those that link homes to clean, safe water networks, or spread messages of protecting health through safe handling of food and water and rational use of medicines.

Learn more about Anera at anera.org.

Join Our Global Fundraising Movement

Giving back has never been more fun. Join our Craving Palestine fundraising movement and be part of our global family, creating long-lasting impact one recipe and supper club at a time.

GIFT Gift this beautiful book to friends and family for any celebratory occasion including baby showers, bachelorette/hen parties, bridal showers, birthdays, and on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

HOST OR ATTEND Why not host a supper club, inviting friends, colleagues, and your neighbors to a Craving Palestine breakfast, brunch, or dinner? Or attend one already in the works. Supper clubs have been hosted in major cities worldwide, from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to Dubai and New York. To learn more about hosting a supper club, participating contributors, chefs, and restaurants, visit our website (cravingpalestine.com).

Host a bake sale to raise funds at your school, local club, office, or college. Or host a cooking class for budding chefs or a knafeh stand at your local park.

SHARE AND SPREAD THE LOVE Share your love for Palestinian food and your Craving Palestine recipe creations with us on Instagram or Twitter by tagging us or adding #cravingpalestine, and we will re-post our favorite creations.

VISIT AND TASTE PALESTINE Palestine's rich history and arts collection, combined with its vibrant food and restaurant scene, make it the perfect destination for foodies. To plan your trip, turn to the Visit Palestine section of this book (see p. 246) and visit our website for an updated list.

For more information, visit cravingpalestine.com, or follow us on our socials (Instagram: @cravingpalestine, Twitter @cravepalestine).

MIRNA BAMIEH, Artist
Origin: Jerusalem / Residence: Jerusalem
@palestine_hosting_society

Mirna Bamieh is a artist from Jerusalem and founder of Palestine Hosting Society, a live art project that explores traditional food cultures in Palestine, especially those that are on the verge of disappearing.

Khushkash Oranges Marmalade (V)

My father's family is originally from Yaffa, the land that once was the land of citrus. The marmalade prepared from this citrus was my father's favorite, and the one I would later prepare from the tree he planted at his garden. Unfortunately, the uses of it are being lost with time, as fewer and fewer people know how to deal with its acidity and bitterness. Through my work, I wish to preserve such treasured recipes so that others may remember the taste of this exquisite tree.

Serves: As desired

2 lbs (1 kilo) of Seville orange bulb (weight of bulb after soaking in for 2-3 days)
4.5 lbs (2 kilo) (approximate) sugar (weight of bulb after soaking and juicing, then match the weight in sugar)
4 cups (1 liter) Seville orange juice
¼ cup (60 ml) lemon juice
¼ cup (60 ml) orange blossom
1 tsp (5 ml) good mastic

Equipment
3 quart (3 liter) sterilized jars

1. After washing the Seville oranges well, remove the zest from the fruit with a grinder, then flavor.
2. Squeeze the juice of the oranges and remove the pit, keeping the white thick bulb. Cut the pulp into quarters or thin strips.
3. Soak the pulp in water for 48 hours, changing the water every couple of hours.
4. Match the scale number with sugar. You'll need all the sugar to balance the sour and bitter taste of this citrus.
5. For each 2 lbs of pulp, add 4 cups of Seville orange juice, to that, match 1-to-1 in sugar.
6. Soak the pulp-juice-sugar mixture overnight. Then place in a pot over medium heat and stir until it simmers. Spoon out the white froth that has gathered on top.
7. After you remove all the froth, stir the mixture. When the syrup starts to thicken, add juice of one lemon for each kilogram of pulp and the mastic. Then add the orange blossom to the jam when it's hot.
8. Put the jam in sterilized jars, and close them when they cool down.

Note: If Seville oranges cannot be located, you can use other bitter oranges.

TAREK BISHARA, Actor, Writer
Originally from Nazareth / Resides in Los Angeles
@tarekbisharaofficial

Tarek Bishara is an actor and writer who has appeared in films opposite Robin Williams, Terrence Howard, Richard Gere, Tim Roth, Mia Farrow, Tim Allen, and Sarah Ramos, and has appeared on numerous TV shows around the world. Tarek is currently developing several projects in film and TV.

Eggs and Za'atar in a Hole (V)

My dad, Wafa, taught me to make this savory breakfast. Because I cook most of my own meals, I often come back to the dishes that are both easy to make and evoke the most pleasant memories. So, when I go home to visit my family, no matter what, my dad makes eggs on Sundays. Sometimes, simple is best.

Serves 4–6

3 tbsp (50 ml) za'atar
1 tbsp (15 ml) sumac
Pinch of sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 loaf of Italian or French bread, cut into 2 inches (5 cm)-wide slices (6 slices)
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
6 large eggs
1 medium tomato, sliced
1 small cucumber, sliced
Feta or halloumi cheese

1 In a small bowl, stir together the za'atar, sumac, and salt and pepper; set aside.

2 Scoop out a quarter-size hole in the center of each slice of bread.

3 In a large frying pan over medium heat, heat oil. When hot, arrange half of the bread slices in the pan and brown, about 1 minute on each side.

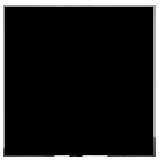
4 Reduce the heat to low and crack one egg into the hole in the middle of each slice of bread.

5 Sprinkle the za'atar mixture over the eggs, then cover and cook to your desired doneness, 2–3 minutes. Season with pepper.

6 Using a spatula, transfer the toast with eggs to serving plates and keep warm. Repeat with the remaining golden bread slices.

7 Serve warm with a side of sliced tomatoes and cucumbers, slices of feta cheese, or halloumi cheese.

Note: This dish can be served in various ways, including enjoyed directly from the pan with toast on the side. If you like your yolk cooked really well, scoop some oil from the bottom of the pan and drizzle over the top of each egg.



ROBERT KETTUN, Sports Director, Professional Football Player
Originally from Bethlehem / Residence: Santiago / @robertkettun

Robert Kettun, a non-Palestinian football player, and a non-Arab Latin American, is currently the sports director of Atletico Fernandez Valdivia (AFV), the sports director of Palestinian football club, and the head of FIFA's Sports Management in Chile.

Shakshuka (V)

Shakshuka reminds me of running in the morning on the beach in Gaza and diving into its beautiful sea. There, a chance encounter with a wonderful lifeguard ends in her inviting me for breakfast, where I had the best shakshuka of my life. Since then, it has become one of my favorite Palestinian breakfast dishes. Palestinian food is one of the top three cuisines in the world, but what makes it even tastier and special is to try it in Palestine, with its kindest, simplest, and most hospitable people.

Serves 4–6

8 to 10 garlic cloves, finely minced
3 tbsp (50 ml) olive oil
3 green chilies, chopped
1 red chili, chopped
1 to 2 tsp (5 to 10 ml) crushed red chili flakes
2 spring green onions, chopped finely (optional)
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin seeds
2 lbs (1 kg) fresh tomatoes, diced
Salt, to taste
6 large eggs
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the Garnish
¼ cup (60 ml) parsley or fresh mint, chopped
Green spring onions, chopped (optional)

1. Heat the olive oil in a casserole, or medium heat. Add the garlic, chilies, red chili flakes, spring green onions, and cumin seeds for about 2 minutes, until fragrant.
2. Add the tomatoes with salt to taste, and stir to combine. Lower the heat and cover; allow the sauce to simmer until it thickens, about 15–20 minutes.
3. When the sauce has a thickened consistency, add the eggs over the tomatoes and sprinkle with pepper, then cover. Cook the eggs until your preferred level of doneness. Remove from the heat.
4. Garnish with chopped parsley leaves (or fresh mint leaves) and spring green onions (optional). Serve with bread (pita or naan preferred).

Note: Adjust quantity of eggs, spices and chilies as per your preference and cook eggs until preferred level of doneness. Garnish as desired.

NAHED ATTAR, Recipe Developer, Interpreter, Linguist
Originally from Jaffa / Resident of Cardiff / @cooking.journey

Nahed is an interpreter and linguist residing in Cardiff, who returned her passion and love for Palestinian food to develop innovative recipes, as a way to stay connected with home.

Labneh Balls (V)

When I was growing up, jars of labneh balls were displayed beautifully like flowers on a nearby shelf, ready for a quick sandwich in the morning or for school lunch. My grandmother used to make the best homemade labneh, a recipe my mother learned. Keen on keeping this tradition alive, I regularly make these simple yet indulging appetizers for my family, and I feel closer to home. It is perfect as part of a mezze selection or simply spread on toasted flatbread. Here is an updated version, including some toppings to add color and a beautiful touch.

Makes 20-25 small balls

½ tsp (7 ml) salt
1 cup plain yogurt
Extra virgin olive oil, for storage
3 tbsp (50 ml) za'atar
3 tbsp (50 ml) chili flakes
3 tbsp (50 ml) nigella seeds
3 tbsp (50 ml) sumac
3 tbsp (50 ml) sesame seed
3 tbsp (50 ml) crushed walnuts
3 tbsp (50 ml) crushed pistachios
3 tbsp (50 ml) chives
3 tbsp (50 ml) oregano

Equipment
Cheesecloth
Medium-size glass jar

1. Lay a cheesecloth over a large clear plate or bowl. Stir the salt into the yogurt and pour it onto the cheesecloth. Gather the cheesecloth around the sides and tie. Place the cheesecloth in the clear to drain the whey or hang on the faucet over the kitchen sink.
2. Leave it overnight (or 24 hours in the fridge) until all the whey liquid stops dripping.
3. Roll your hands together with some olive oil and roll the labneh into small balls (around 1 inch, or 3 cm, each).
4. Place your choice of toppings on different plates. Roll one ball at a time in a different topping until well-coated. Press gently onto it so that the toppings stay. You can serve immediately or store until later.
5. To store: Fill half of a glass jar with olive oil. Place the balls slowly in it, then pour more olive oil until fully covered. Add the lid tightly. It should keep for several months if placed in the fridge.

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REV. DR. MITRI RAHEB, Public Figure
Origin: Bethlehem / Residence: Bethlehem / @mitriraheb

Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb is the founder and president of Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem, where cuisine is one of the major programs offered as a means to treat food as a tool for building bridges between Palestinian Christians and Muslims. Raheb is also the founder of several NGOs, in addition to other civic initiatives on the local and global level.

Arabic Omelet (V)

My father, Bishara, used to go every day early in the morning to the vegetable market to get fresh produce. He knew all the local farmers and knew what to get where. My mother, Wadi'a, was well-known for cooking local dishes. Twice a week she prepared Arabic Omelets for us.

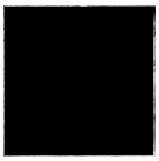
Serves 1

½ cup (120 ml) onion, diced
2 large eggs
½ cup (120 ml) flour
1 cup (250 ml) water
½ cup (60 ml) combination of chopped fresh parsley and mint leaves
½ tsp (5 ml) nutmeg
½ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
Olive oil, for heating pan

For Plating
Toasted bread
Handful of olives, sliced tomatoes and cucumbers

Equipment: 3 liter sterilized jars

1. Whisk all ingredients together well.
2. In a nonstick pan, heat several tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Ladle one-fourth of the mixture into the pan and cook until eggs are almost set. Flip and continue cooking for several minutes. Slide onto a plate and top with apple jelly (if desired) or fold in half and serve directly on the pan (whatever you prefer).
3. Serve next to toasted bread, olives, and sliced tomatoes and cucumbers.



SOFIA HALABI, Chef, Writer
Originally from Bethlehem / Resides in Portugal / @sofiahalabi

A Chilean-Palestinian, Sofia Halabi combines her work in her family's textile business (which her grandfather founded when he arrived in Chile from Palestine in the 1920s) with her real passion for cooking traditional Palestinian food. These recipes are passed down from her mom and grandmother.

Cheese Sambousek (V)

This recipe smells like Palestine, tastes like Palestine, and reconnects me with my roots and reminds me of my grandmother. Cooking for my loved ones shows them that we have an identity and traditions that cannot be erased. Our food represents who we are, as Palestinians, and is our way of resistance.

For the Stuffing

1 lb (300 g) white, salty akkawi cheese
1 cup (25 g) fresh za'atar or 1 tbsp (15 ml) dried za'atar
1 medium egg

For the Dough

2 cups (300 g) white flour
¼ tsp (7 ml) dry yeast
¼ tsp (7 ml) sugar
¼ tsp (8 ml) salt
¼ tsp (8 ml) baking powder
½ cup (120 ml) cooking oil
1¼–1½ cups (300–355 ml) warm water

1. Soak the white cheese in warm water to remove some of the salt.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, yeast, sugar, salt, and baking powder with a fork.
3. Add the oil and warm water slowly, working the dough with your hands until you get a soft, non-sticky dough. Cover dough and let rise for 1½ hours at room temperature.
4. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). While it's preheating, make the stuffing. Remove the leaves of the za'atar from the stem and wash thoroughly. Dry the leaves with a paper towel and chop with a fork. Mix with the egg and the za'atar.
5. Place the dough on a floured surface and cut it into two pieces. With a rolling pin, stretch the dough to 2 inches (45 mm) thick. Using a cup, cut 2.5–3" circles in the dough.
6. Place 1 tsp of the stuffing into one side of the dough, and then cover it with the other side. Press the edges together with a fork to seal.
7. Place on a greased baking tray, letting them rest for 20 minutes. Bake in the oven for 20–30 minutes, until golden brown.

LINA MAKOUL, Singer, Songwriter, Actress
Original Aka / Residence Aka / @linamakoul

Lina Makoul is a Palestinian-born singer, songwriter, and actress who made history by winning The Voice Israel and being the first Palestinian singer to advocate for the international LGBTQ community across the world. She has one for Queer Arab Lament, Wild Child, Lazy Jeff, and the biggest girl group band, Little Mix. Lina's passion is using her music to bring people, cultures, and hearts together.

Za'atar Filled Flatbreads (V)

I love food—looking at it, smelling it, eating it slowly and passionately, and of course, taking pictures of it. Fresh za'atar flatbreads take me back to summer vacations. As a child, my siblings and I used to wake up in my parents' house in Akka to the smell of the bread around us downstairs to have it as our breakfast. I hope you enjoy preparing it with your beloved ones, while making as many memories as possible.

Serves 4–6

For the Dough
4½ cups (1 liters) all-purpose flour
1½ tbsp (20 ml) active dry yeast
Salt, to taste
1 tsp (5 ml) sugar
1 cup (250 liters) extra-virgin olive oil
2½ cups (600 liters) warm water

For the Filling
2 cups (500 liters) fresh za'atar akdar leaves
1 large onion or 6 spring onions, finely chopped
Salt, to taste
½ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Black pepper, to taste

1 Mix all the dry ingredients (of the dough) well and add 1 cup of olive oil; knead the mixture gradually adding the warm water. Cover the dough and set aside for 1 hour at room temperature.

2 Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Prepare the filling: Chop fresh za'atar leaves slightly and chop 1 large onion or spring onions. Add salt to taste and ¼ cup olive oil.

3 Combine the dough without kneading. Then cut it into 8–10 medium-size pieces and round each to hard-size balls. Set aside for 10 minutes (covered).

4 Flatten the dough balls by hand (one at a time), add the rest of the olive oil, and spike some of the filling into it. Fold each piece of dough from 4 sides (maybe wrapping a little bit).

5 Place parchment paper on a sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil. Flatten each dough piece on the sheet pan (make it really thin).

6 Bake until the dough turns light golden brown, about 8–15 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

DR. JEFFREY A. HAMMOND, MD, FACS
Surgeon, Author, Philanthropist, Mentor
Original Parallah / Resident of Los Angeles

With over 20 years of education, residency and fellowship training at Harvard University, Northwestern, and UCLA, Dr. Hammond has devoted his life to advancing surgical innovation and dedicated technology and currently leads a groundbreaking neurosurgical research project that has transformed thousands of lives.

Spinach Fatayer Turnovers (V)

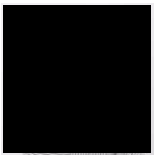
Fatayer Sabah is my favorite shared memory of childhood memories walking to my sitti's home in Parallah and asking her to make spinach pies. She would cut fresh spinach from her backyard and bake it with homemade fresh dough.

Serves 6

For the Dough
1¼ tsp (2 g) dry yeast
2 cups (5 liters) warm water
2 tsp (10 ml) sugar
4 cups (1 liter) white flour
¼ cup (60 ml) fresh olive oil
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ cup (120 ml) yogurt (optional)

For the Stuffing
2 lbs (1 kg) fresh spinach, chopped
1 large yellow onion, chopped
2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
1 tbsp (15 ml) sumac
¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
¼ tsp (7 ml) salt
Fresh squeezed half lemon, for juice
Poppy seeds, for topping (optional)

1. In a medium bowl, mix yeast with ¼ cup warm water and 2 tsp sugar. Leave for 5 minutes to rise.
2. Mix flour with olive oil and salt, and add yeast mix. Slowly knead flour, adding warm water as needed. Let it rest covered with a damp cloth at room temperature for 1 hour for full dough rise.
3. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Make the stuffing by adding all the stuffing ingredients, and knead firmly for a few minutes, if working a dough is a side.
4. Divide dough into small round balls, like the size of a golf ball. Press each ball with the palm of the hand until flattened.
5. Place 1 tbsp of the mix in the center of the round dough pieces.
6. Fold a piece of dough from each side (total of 3 sides) toward the center to make a triangle shape. Press to seal the center of the fold. Brush top of pies with olive oil, then, optional, sprinkle poppy seeds.
7. Place all folded pies on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Bake until golden brown on top, about 17-20 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes before serving.



HEBA JITAN, Chef, Lawyer, Advocate
Origin: Nablus / Residence: Jerusalem / @hebajitan

Between practicing law, hearing a lone cooking show, and writing, Heba has always been passionate about cooking and sharing wholesome Palestinian recipes with her audience.

Yafawi Sfeeha Meat Pastry

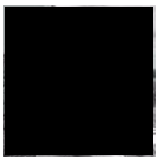
Yafawi Sfeeha, means a lot to me for sentimental reasons, as it's about the life I started with my second family, with my husband. My mother-in-law taught me this delicious recipe, and I fell in love with it immediately. I hope you do, too, as life is all about sharing good food, love, and new experiences.

Serves: 5

For the Dough
8 cups (1 kg) flour
1 medium egg
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tbsp (15 ml) sugar
2/3 cup (80 ml) canola oil
Water, as needed

For the Filling
2 lbs (1 kg) minced lamb meat
6¼ cups medium yellow onion, chopped
Olive oil, for pan
Salt, to taste
1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon
1 tsp (5 ml) allspice
Canola oil, for frying, 3 tsp (15 ml)
nine and a half
Pepper, to taste
Half a bunch parsley (optional)
Toasted sesame seeds (optional)

1. Mix flour, egg, salt, sugar, and oil in bowl and gradually add water until the dough separates from the sides of the bowl. Keep kneading until you get a nice soft dough. Set aside for 2 hours covered with cloth.
2. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Cut the dough into medium-size balls and leave them to rest for 15 minutes.
3. In a large skillet, sauté the onions with a dash of olive oil and a pinch of salt. Once cooked but not browned, add the ground beef, pepper, cinnamon, and allspice. Once the onions are golden, add the meat and stir, cooking gently. Add the parsley (optional).
4. Press one dough ball of flat on a dry surface and stretch it into a circle with your fingers and hands (olive oil preferred here) until it is a big thin circle. Cut the circle into two halves.
5. Spread the stuffing along the straight side and roll it out. Then shape it into a pinwheel. Place it in a baking pan. Repeat with the rest of the balls.
6. Bake them until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Top with toasted sesame seeds, if desired.



[redacted]
Origin: Jerusalem / Residence: Jerusalem / @[redacted]

Dina's Palestinian food recipes have been passed down from her great-grandmother to her grandmother and then to her mom. Using her creative flair, she adds her own innovation, spice to reflect her Arab-Palestinian origin.

Za'atar and Cheese Balls (V)

This recipe goes way back to my childhood years, when our home was always full of za'atar cheese balls, for any special occasion. I have passed the same tradition on to my son. Za'atar Cheese Balls are super easy to make. I love baking them on weekends; I freeze za'atar leaves to use in a pinch in case I cannot find them fresh.

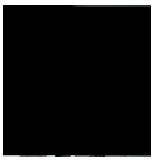
Serves 6

For the Dough
1 cup (250 liters) warm water
1 tbsp (15 ml) sugar
1 tbsp (15 ml) instant yeast
5 cups (1.2 liters) flour
3 tbsp (50 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla powder
Pinch of salt
½ cup (120 ml) yogurt

For the Stuffing
1 cup (250 liters) za'atar leaves, either dried or fresh
Vinegar cheese, lightly salted

1. In a small bowl, mix warm water, sugar, salt, and yeast together. Set aside.
2. In a separate bowl, mix the flour with olive oil, salt, and vanilla.
3. Then add the yogurt and yeast to the vanilla mixture. Add za'atar leaves to the dough and mix well.
4. Place the cheese in the middle of a ball of dough and round all together. Spread olive oil on the dough and cover with a plastic sheet. Let rise for around 2 hours.
5. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes.

الاحتلال يتعمد قطع الطريق الواصلة
بين قرى شمال غرب القدس ورام



YACOB ABDULLAKHEL, Business man
Origin: Nablus / Residence: Nablus / @jacob_sc

Yacob Kahel is a business man residing at Mount Gerizim in Nablus, and part of the Samaritan community that adheres to a religion closely related to Judaism. Samaritans carry three official identities: Palestinian, Jordanian, and Israeli and speak fluent Arabic, modern Hebrew, and ancient Hebrew.

Tahini Sfeeha Flatbreads

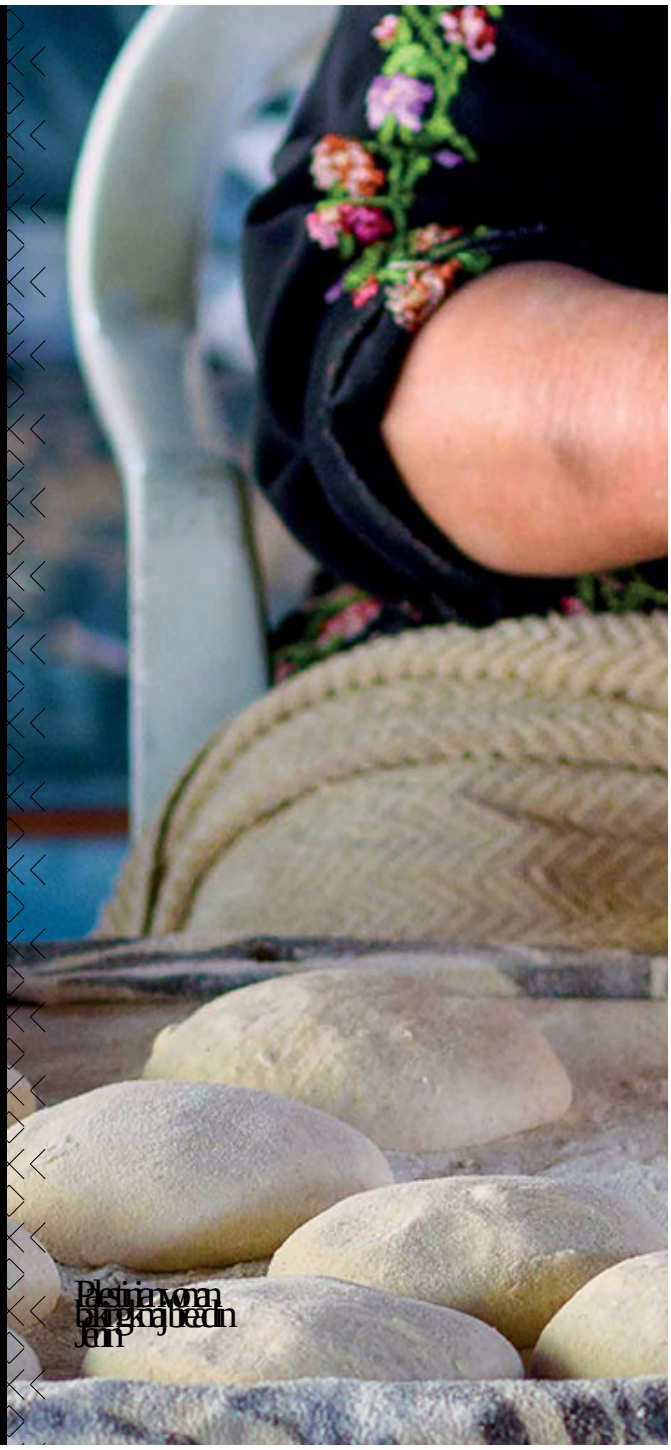
Millions around the world know about the term "Good Samaritan." Thousands know about this term from the book of Luke in the Bible's New Testament, but very few people know that there is a Samaritan community, my community, that is still alive today in the Holy Land that traces its origins back more than 3,000 years to biblical times. Today, there are 800 Samaritans left in the world. The community is a bridge of peace between the two nations of Palestine and Israel. This is a very special family recipe, passed down through generations.

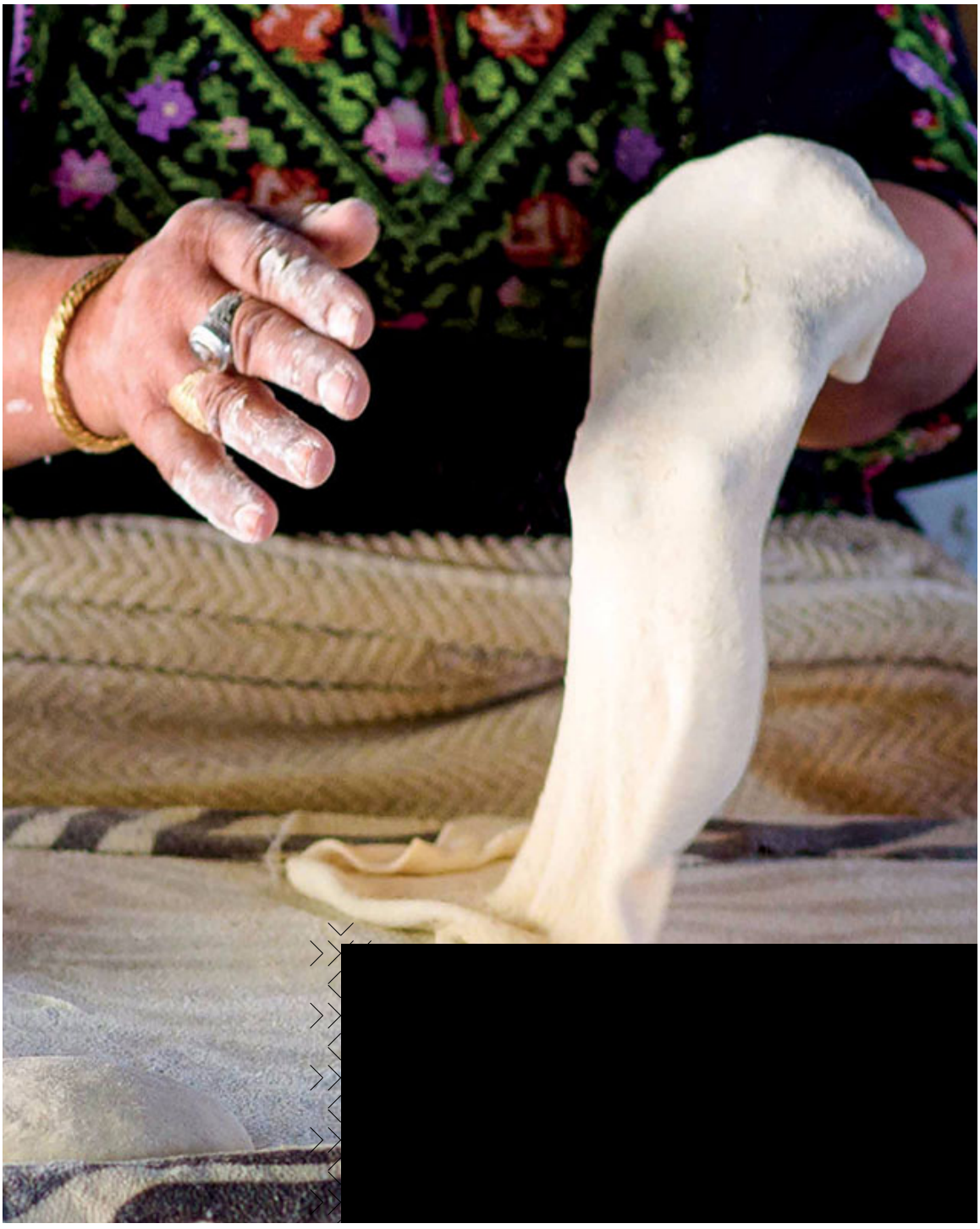
Serves: 6

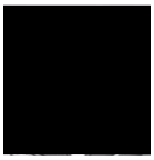
For the Dough
8 cups (1 kg) flour
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
3 tsp (15 ml) sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) yeast
¼ cup (60 ml) vegetable oil
4 cups (1 liter) warm water

For the Filling
1 medium onion
1 lb (500 g) minced beef meat
½ cup (120 ml) tahini
½ cup (120 ml) lemon juice
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) seven-spice mix

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Knead the dough ingredients together and leave the dough for 30 minutes, covered, to rise.
3. While the dough is rising on medium heat, stir together the onion and ground beef until the meat is brown. Then add the rest of the ingredients and mix together.
4. Cut the dough into circles and put them on trays.
5. Fill the dough with the stuffing and wrap the dough around.
6. Cook in preheated oven for 30 minutes, until dough is browned. Let cool before serving.







SAWSAN ABU ARRA, Orthodontist, Food Stylist, Blogger
Originally from / Resides in Amman / @chefindisguise
As an orthodontist by profession and a food blogger and photographer by passion, Sawsan shares Palestinian food stories with the world

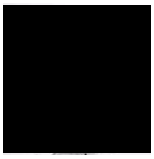
Olive Oil Bread (V)

These beautifully decorated loaves remind me of my grandmother, Afeefeh Abdul Hakeem. She made these loaves for us during the olive pressing season in Jenin. Special hand crafted molds are used to give the bread the beautiful patterns on top. The little circles are supposed to resemble the effect rain drops leave when they hit the olive oil or water.

Makes 8 large or 20 small loaves

3 tsp (15 ml) dry yeast
2 cups (500 liters) water
2 tsp (10 ml) sugar
5 cups flour
1 cup (250 liters) powdered milk
2 tbsp (30 ml) anise seeds
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground anise
½ tsp (25 ml) ground nutmeg
½ tsp (25 ml) ground fennel seeds
1 tbsp (15 ml) black sesame seeds
2–3 cup (500–750 liters) extra-virgin olive oil
Olive oil for brushing the bread

1. Proof the yeast by mixing the yeast with ½ cup of water and sugar. Wait for it to foam and double.
2. In a large bowl, mix the flour, powdered milk, anise seeds, ground anise, nutmeg, and fennel seeds. Add the olive oil and mix between your fingers until the mixture resembles wet sand.
3. Add the yeast water mixture and start kneading the dough. Gradually add the water until you get a smooth dough that does not stick to your hands or the bowl. Cover the dough and allow it to double at room temperature for 1 hour.
4. Preheat your oven to 520°F (270°C) and position the oven rack in the middle.
5. Cut the dough into 20 small balls or 10 bigger ones, depending on the size of the loaves you want. Roll the dough into a circle 1 cm thick-ness.
6. Arrange the dough circles on a baking sheet that has been brushed with olive oil or lined with parchment paper. Brush the dough with olive oil and sprinkle with black sesame seeds.
7. Bake in the oven until the bottoms are golden brown, about 7–10 minutes.
8. Turn on the broiler and allow the top to become golden brown, about 3 minutes.
9. Cool the bread on a wire rack and serve with salty cheese.



SAWSAN DAANA, Chef
Originally from Jerusalem, Hebron / Resides in Kuwait / @sawsanabakri

Born in Jerusalem, Sawsan recreates stories and memories of the holy land through her Palestinian recipes, available at Mabaki, a catering company specializing in Middle Eastern cuisine.

Labneh with Za'atar (V)

This recipe is special to me because it holds scents and tastes of memories in Palestine. Pouring the olive oil, picking the fresh za'atar, and preparing this simple and deliciously fragrant labneh plate takes me back to my mother, my father, and our beloved home land every time.

Serves 4

1 lb (500 g) labneh
1 lemon zest
Dash salt
1 tsp (5 ml) chili flakes
½ lb (100 g) fresh green za'atar
1 tsp (5 ml) toasted sesame seeds
1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Handful pomegranate seeds (optional)

1 In a mixing bowl, add the labneh, lemon zest, and a dash of salt. Add chili flakes.

2 Garnish with fresh za'atar leaves, toasted sesame seeds, olive oil, and another sprinkle of chili flakes and pomegranate seeds (optional). Enjoy!

Note: Labneh, a tangy soft cheese, can be bought at any Middle Eastern retailer. Labneh is delicious spread on a wheat or rye cracker, pita bread or as a dip next to crudités or any vegetables.

MUSTAFA SALAMEH, Mountaineer, Motivational Speaker
Original Ramallah / Residence Dublin / @mustafasalameh

Mustafa Salameh is one of only 16 people to ever climb the Seven Summits and conquer the South Pole and the North Pole—known as the Explorer's Grand Slam—and became the first Jordanian to climb Mount Everest in 2018. That was also the year King Abdullah II of Jordan knighted Mustafa. He is also an author, an inspirational speaker and invested in motivating youth into realizing their dreams.

Ful Medames (V)

Ful Medames is one of my favorite dishes to have at any time, but especially when I am in the mountains. This dish is strongly related to my grandmother, who used to make it for us for breakfast as children in the refugee camp where I used to live. At the camp, we needed a filling meal that used minimal and affordable ingredients, yet were flavorsome and packed with protein and energy. I believe love our family's food because it is tied to a memory, we renew this memory through it, and eat it with every bite, and that's why we feel pleasure and warmth.

Serves 2–3

1 can fava beans
1 tomato, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 sweet green pepper or hot green pepper
1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Salt, to taste
1 sprig flat leaf parsley, finely chopped
Pita bread
Tomato slices
Onion wedges, raw

1. In a medium saucepan, add the beans with their liquid. Bring to a boil over medium heat until beans are tender, approximately 6–8 minutes. Remove from heat.
2. Add sliced tomatoes, crushed garlic, pepper, lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Toss well to combine and coat. Garnish with parsley and drizzle of oil.
3. Serve warm with pita bread, tomato slices, and onion wedges.

Note: Adjust use of hot green pepper as per preference.

PASHA KOUREBOUZOV, Entrepreneur
Original from / Resident of London / @pkouzo

Pasha Kourebouzov is a native Russian who has traveled between New York, Paris, and London. Educated at Brown University, he launched his career as a investment banker at JP Morgan in New York. He managed his interest in fashion while working as a luxury goods analyst at Merrill Lynch, and UBS in London, and subsequently created the e-commerce site with the launch of Pa-Boutique.com.

Muhammara (V)

A very dear friend of mine is a fabulous cook, and her Palestinian heritage shines brightly in her cooking. She has always had a place for me at her dinner table, and this is one of her special dishes that always make me smile.

Serves 6–8

1½ cups (350 g) lightly toasted walnuts
4 roasted red bell peppers, blistered and chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tbsp (15 ml) dried chili flakes
1 tbsp (15 ml) paprika
1 tbsp (15 ml) cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) coarse sea salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) freshly ground black pepper
3 tbsp (50 ml) lemon juice
3 tbsp (50 ml) pomegranate molasses
¼ cup (60 ml) plain bread crumbs
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

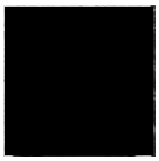
For the Garnish
Olive oil for drizzling to taste
1 tbsp (15 ml) finely chopped fresh mint (optional)

1 In a food processor, grind (until walnuts are still visible) the walnuts, red peppers, garlic, chili flakes, paprika, cumin, sea salt, black pepper, lemon juice, and pomegranate molasses.

2 Combine the bread crumbs with olive oil. Add into the walnut and bell pepper mix. Chill in an airtight container for an hour.

3 Serve dizzled with olive oil and fresh mint and enjoy with bread.

Note: Once prepared, will last 4 days in the fridge.



NABLAWI, Artist
Original from Hebron / Resides in Ramallah / @nablawi

Nabil is an award-winning artist, painter, ceramicist, and sculptor and has played a key role in the establishment of the first International Academy of Fine Arts in Palestine. Nabil is also the co-author of a number of books on Palestinian arts and folklore. He was awarded the first Palestinian National Prize for Visual Art in 1997 by Yasser Arafat and was awarded the prestigious King Abdallah II Arab World Prize for Fine Art.

The Palestinian Falafel (V)

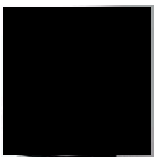
Back in the 1980s, Israeli artists started campaigning to brand the Palestinian falafel to their cuisine, to give their identity a civilized dimension. It was a poster campaign, presenting a falafel sandwich with an Israeli toothpick flag. We as Palestinian artists couldn't see one of our national heritage dishes stolen and remain silent. Therefore, we started a counter-campaign with the same poster but with our Palestinian national toothpick flag. Our campaign gained wide visibility on an international level. As a result, it's the perfect recipe to share.

Serves 6-8
Makes 30 pieces

1 lb (500 g) dry chickpeas (soaked 24 hours)
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped parsley
3 cloves garlic
1½ tsp (20 ml) flour
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt
2 tsp (10 ml) cumin
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
Vegetable oil, for frying

For the Garnish
Tahini sauce
Diced tomatoes
Chopped parsley
Green pickles
Chopped cucumbers

1. In a large covered bowl, soak the chickpeas in cold water overnight. In the morning, the chickpeas will be double the size.
2. Rinse the well, then pour the chickpeas, coriander, parsley, garlic, flour, salt, cumin, coriander, and pepper into a food processor.
3. Pulse all ingredients together until a rough, coarse meal forms. The mixture should be between the texture of couscous and paste. Do not over-process, because you will get a hummus paste if you do!
4. Put the texture in a bowl, mix it with a fork, and move any large chunks left. Wrap the bowl and refrigerate it for 2 hours.
5. Fill a medium-size skillet with vegetable oil to deep-fry the falafel, until it gets hot. Meanwhile, form the falafel mixture into balls using your hands (use 2 tbsp of the mixture to form each ball). You can control the size of the ball you desire.
6. Fry the falafel balls until they get golden brown on both sides. Drain using paper towels to get rid of the extra oil.
7. Serve with hummus or tahini sauce and chopped vegetables.



DALIA SHAHEEN, Nutritionist
Originally from Hebron / Resides in Ramallah / @dalia.munsters

Through her blog, Dalia introduces authentic Palestinian recipes and dishes with a modern, healthy twist, all served in Hebron's beautiful mosaics. She believes that the ability to cook your own authentic, healthy meals is a source of empowerment and food is a universal language that allows cultures and nations to communicate and share knowledge.

Beetroot Hummus (V)

In Palestine, every family has its own special hummus recipe. The beauty of hummus lies in its versatile nature, and I came to enjoy the different flavors it has. During beetroot season, my dad gave me one from Jericho and I decided to attempt a new hybrid recipe: beetroot hummus.

Serves 6

For the Hummus
1¾ cup (400 grams) cooked chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1 small beetroot
1 tsp (5 ml) baking soda
Olive oil
Salt and pepper
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tbsp (30 ml) tahini
Juiced ¼ lemon
¼ cup (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

For the Garnish
Walnuts
Pomegranate seeds (optional)

1. Soak chickpeas overnight in water and make sure they're always covered with enough water.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
3. Once cooled in size, cook chickpeas with a teaspoon of baking soda until soft. Drain and keep half cup of the hot water.
4. Rub your beetroot with olive oil and salt and pepper. Place in oven and roast until soft and cooked through, approximately 1 hour.
5. Place roasted beetroot in a bowl and put in the fridge to cool to room temperature.
6. Peel the beetroot, cut into quarters, and place in the food processor. Blend until small bits form. Take out ¼ of a cup and set aside.
7. Add remaining hummus ingredients, except for olive oil, and blend until somewhat smooth. Add some of the hot water you kept from cooking the chickpeas to reach the consistency you desire. Finally, add the olive oil and blend again. Adjust salt and lemon as needed.
8. Garnish with walnuts and pomegranate seeds (optional). Save the rest in the fridge for up to a week.

FARAH ABUSAD, Poet, Writer
Originally from Gaza / Resident in Dubai / @caringpalestine

Farah Abusad is the 17-year-old founder and curator of Caring Palestine, which features some of the Palestinian-inspired poetry, projects that she has come across that she loves and admires. She is passionate about the power of the written word and, of course, food, to connect people while giving back to youth in Palestine.

Pumpkin Hummus (V)

You can always find a version of hummus amongst a variety of Palestinian favorite meze-style dishes as a welcoming ritual at our home. This pumpkin hummus, an adventurous take on the traditional recipe, was inspired by my mom, who introduces pumpkin-infused dishes every fall season.

Serves 4

For the Hummus
1 small, firm butternut pumpkin (1.5 pounds; 700 grams), peeled and cubed
2 tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
5 tbsp (75 ml) tahini
½ small garlic clove, pressed
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt, more to taste
Olive oil, for roasting
¼ tsp (1 ml) hot chili powder (optional)

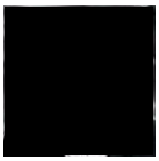
For the Garnish
Fresh parsley or cilantro, chopped finely
Baharat/Middle Eastern seasoning
Extra-virgin olive oil, drizzled
Hand-full toasted pumpkin seeds

1 Cut your pumpkin into evenly sized pieces and coat in a little olive oil.

2 Heat up the oven to 425°F (220°C) and line a baking tray with a piece of baking paper. Bake until soft and slightly caramelized, for about 30 minutes.

3 Transfer the pumpkin pieces to a food processor. Add the tahini, pressed garlic, chili, salt, and lemon juice to taste. Whizz until smooth. If the paste is too thick, thicken in 1-2 tbsp of water to thin it out.

4 Transfer to a plate and smooth it with the back of a spoon. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil and garnish with parsley, a dash of baharat and toasted pumpkin seeds as desired. Serve next to a side of fresh vegetables or crudités.



AHMED ASHKAR, CEO, Founder Hult Prize
Original Team / Resident Northern Virginia / @mayorofimpact

Meet Ahmed Ashkar is the CEO and founder of the Hult Prize Foundation - and on a Time magazine cover story that featured the top ideas changing the world. He is also the founding CEO of Flat Earth Inc, a fast-growing venture-backed social enterprise that feeds and empowers refugees around the world.

Za'atar Manakeesh Twists (V)

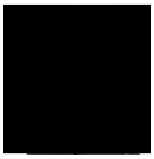
Here is a twist on a Palestinian classic – manakeesh. Growing up, my mom did what she had to do to keep five growing children well-fed and cultured. She baked. I woke up daily to the sweet smell of freshly baked pita bread, and I loved baking with her on weekends. She taught me the difference between a standard pita bread dough and one that was specifically for manakeesh. By the time I went off to college, I was fully equipped to run my own kitchen.

Serves 8

For the Dough
1 cup (250 ml) warm water
1 tsp (5 ml) sugar
2¼ cups (560 ml) active dry yeast
3 cups (750 ml) all-purpose flour
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
1 cup (250 ml) olive oil

For the Filling
7 to 8 tbsp (100–120 ml) quality za'atar spice
½ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1. In a small bowl, combine water, sugar, and yeast. Add warm water gradually. Set aside for 10 minutes to foam.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, salt, and olive oil. Knead and make a well (hole) in the middle. Pour in the yeast and water mixture. Stir until dough forms.
3. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 10 minutes.
4. Form dough into a ball and place in a lightly oiled mixing bowl. Cover with damp cloth and place in a warm spot for the dough to rise for about 1 hour 30 minutes.
5. Knead briefly, form into 6–8 balls. Arrange on lightly floured surface. Cover again and let rise for another 30 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 220°C and place a large baking sheet in the oven while heating.
7. Prepare the filling: Mix the za'atar spice with the olive oil in a bowl.
8. Lightly oil the heated baking sheet. Flatten the dough and start twisting it gradually to shape like a cinnamon bun. Then spread 1 tablespoon za'atar topping on each side as you twist so the mix is generously spread.
9. Bake until golden around the edges, about 5 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool before serving.



LANA ABU-HIJLEH, Palestinian Business woman, Development Professional
Origin: Nablus / Residence: Jerusalem / @amoshen

I am served with UNDP for 17 years, has been leading Global Communities-Palestine, an International NGO, for the past 16 years, is a board member of multiple private sector entities, including the Palestine Investment Fund and Bank of Palestine.

Mama Shaden Baba Ghannouj (V)

As a teenager, my mother, Shaden, used to send me and my brothers to bake the eggplants trays in the olive wood ovens, many of them located in the old city of Nablus. The smell of roasted vegetables, chicken, and lambs was what would fill our nostrils, making us hungry. That memory encouraged me and my husband, Nasser, to open a boutique hotel called Al Yasmeen, and in that hotel, we opened a restaurant, Zait ou Zaater, to offer healthy roasted food with the same aromas and great taste.

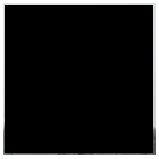
Serves 4

1 large eggplant
2 garlic cloves
Olive oil
3 tbsp (50 ml) tahini paste
1 tbsp (15 ml) fresh lemon juice
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ cup (120 ml) cold water
¼ tsp (1.7 ml) pomegranate molasses

For the Garnish
Finely cut parsley
Ashoosnac
Fresh pomegranate seeds
Extra-virgin olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Slit the eggplant in the long direction only half deph. Salt the eggplant with a sever in the opened slit.
3. Insert the garlic with a few drops of olive oil inside the eggplant's opened slit.
4. Roast the eggplant in the oven for 30 minutes. Let the eggplant rest for 10 minutes after roasting the peel and cut coarsely.
5. Meanwhile, whisk the tahini with 1 tbsp of lemon juice and a dash of salt; add cold water until the mixture is smooth.
6. Add the tahini mixture to the cut eggplant and mix lightly. Add the pomegranate molasses and stir gently. Garnish as desired. Served cold with a side of bread and olives.

Note: Should you prefer the eggplant chunkier, mix gently into the tahini sauce. The trick in the recipe is to roast the garlic inside the eggplant to give the baba ganouj the right garlic taste without an after taste.



AKRAM ANTHONY SHIAN, Entrepreneur, Businessman
Originally from Jerusalem / Resides in Jerusalem / @akramshiany

Akram Shiany is the co-CEO and co-owner of A. Shiany and Sons, the largest importer, distributor, and retailer of consumer electronics and home appliances in the Palestinian market, and established Shiany Home, a successful megastore for electronics and housewares.

Lamb Arayes by Akram

Arayes is a dish I would have at a local grill house in Bethlehem ever since I was a kid. Be it with family, a group of friends, or just the guys, it would always be the first dish we'd order before ordering the meat, and it just made me happy every time. I hope it does you, too.

Serves 4

For the Arayes

2 lbs (1 kg) minced lamb or high-meat with 20 percent fat
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 large tomatoes, slightly roasted, peeled, finely chopped, and strained
2 cloves garlic, finely grated
1 green chili, deseeded and finely chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste
4 khubz bread (aka khaj), 1 per person

For the Tahini Dipping Sauce

3 tbsp (50 ml) 100 percent pure tahini paste
1 tbsp (15 ml) water
Fresh juice of 1 lemon
1 garlic clove, crushed
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Make the arayes: Mix all ingredients in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let sit in the fridge for at least 1 hour.
2. Take mixture out of the fridge at least half an hour before grilling.
3. Preheat gas or charcoal grill to a high heat.
4. Cut one piece of khaj in half. Fill mixture in each half and spread (not too much—around half an inch in thickness). Repeat in as many pieces of bread as it takes to use up the mixture.
5. Lower heat to medium-high on gas grill or on charcoal grill (look for a layer of white ash over glowing red coals).
6. Place the filled khaj halves on the grill and, occasionally, continue cooking for 5 minutes. Then, if the thickness of the khaj allows, place cut half face down on the grill for 30 seconds. Remove from the grill and place on a wooden cutting board, then cut each half into 2 quarters.
7. Make the tahini dipping sauce: Pour tahini in a bowl. Add water to thin it. Add lemon juice and garlic, to taste. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

Note: Khaj, khubz bread, can be bought from any Middle Eastern supermarket or online retailer. It can be substituted with pita bread.

NAJLA SAID, Actor, Writer
Origin: Jerusalem, Nazareth / Residence: New York

Najla Said has performed off-Broadway, regionally, and internationally as well as in film and television. Theatre credits include Heather Raffo's Nine Parts of Desire and Naomi Wallace's The Fever Chart. Three Visions of the Middle East, along with a eight-week run of her solo show Palestine, at the Royal Albert Hall in London, Najla was named one of "forty feminists under forty" by The Feminist Press.

Sitto Mariam Aswad's Kibbeh Nayyeh

My dad, the late Edward Said, loved kibbeh nayyeh more than any other dish on earth, and this recipe was his favorite and my dedication to him. When I was a child, he even insisted we swap out the traditional Christmas turkey (which he loathed) for kibbeh nayyeh. One year, a visiting relative helping my mom in the kitchen mistook the sugar for salt and accidentally added it to the kibbeh recipe. As was his nature, my father was so devastated that he didn't let that relative forget that he "ruined my kibbeh nayyeh" every single time he saw him.

Serves 4

½ cup (120 ml) coarse bulgur (cracked wheat)
1 lb (500 g) lean leg of lamb
Lots of ice cubes
½ tsp (1 ml) ground cinnamon
2 cloves garlic, mint
1 small white onion
2 tsp (35 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cayenne pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) seven-spice
Sides of greens, including scallions, green peppers, white onions, radish, mint (optional)
Extra-virgin olive oil

1. Place the bulgur in a small bowl and rinse it with very cold water then squeeze it as hard as you can to get rid of as much water as possible. Place it aside.

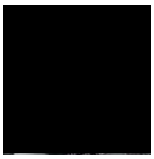
2. Place the trimmed meat in a food processor along with about 5 cubes of ice and ½ tsp of ground cinnamon (for more cinnamon, add more), and process until it becomes very fine. While processing, stop every minute or so to add more ice. Place the ground meat mixture in a large bowl.

3. Put the mint, onion, salt, cayenne pepper, the rest of the cinnamon, and seven-spice in the food processor and mix them well.

4. Add the squeezed bulgur and the spice mixture to the meat. Prepare a small bowl with ice cubes and a pinch of cinnamon for hardening while kneading. Wet your hands frequently in the bowl of ice and cinnamon and knead the mixture until all the ingredients are mixed and blended in well. Refrigerate until you are ready to serve it.

5. Spread the kibbeh on the dish with a spoon, to a thickness of approximately ¾ of an inch. Make one pattern on it. Serve with sides, such as mint, radish, green peppers. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil.

Note: Ask the butcher to give you a pound from the lean side of the leg of lamb, then ask him to remove additional fat.



SAMIR & ISABELLA HADDAD, Founders, Palestinian Hustle
Original Nablus / Residence Tampa / @palestinianhustle

Samir and Isabella Haddad are a father-daughter team and an American-Palestinian lifestyle brand with a simple message: spread love, help others, and always hustle. From building a more equitable food system for all, to believing that through common understanding and creative collaboration, small acts of giving can resonate across the globe to make a big impact.

M'sakhan Rolls

M'sakhan is a staple dish in every Palestinian household. M'sakhan rolls are our family's own take on the classic. They are quick, easy, and delicious. It's even more fun when the whole family joins into make them together. To our family, m'sakhan rolls mean family time and fun.

Serves 6–8

6 chicken breasts
1 medium onion, quartered
6 cardamom pods
1 tsp (5 ml) salt

For the Onion Mix
2½–2¾ cups (5.5–6 liters) extra-virgin olive oil
8 yellow onions, chopped
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cardamom
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) sumac
4 6-wide sharabread (see note)
¼ pound (75 g) toasted pine nuts

1. Preheat oven to 450°F (240°C).
2. Place chicken breasts in a pot of boiling water with the onion, cardamom pods, and salt. Boil for about 10 minutes.
3. Once cooked through, place the chicken breasts in a frying pan, to brown them, about 3 minutes each side. Remove and shred the chicken.
4. Heat the oil in a frying pan and sauté the onions, remaining salt, cumin, black pepper, and cardamom over low heat until completely soft but not browned, about 10 minutes.
5. Add the sumac and mix through and then cook more, about 10 minutes more. Add the shredded chicken into the onions and stir.
6. Cut the sharabread into 10 to 12 squared (4 inches by 4 inches) pieces, and stuff it with the onion and chicken mix. Roll and fold like you would a cigar to secure the filling.
7. Place the filled rolls on a tray lightly brushed with olive oil, and bake until everything has warmed and slightly crisped on the outside, about 5 minutes. Serve with a scatter of toasted pine nuts.

Note: Sharabread can be bought at any Middle Eastern store. It can be substituted with a pita bread or any thin bread.

ASHLEY BAZZAR, Marathon Runner
Original Recipe, Nablus / Residence Amman

As a refugee, Ashley left Nablus due to the 1967 war to settle in Amman and then Kuwait. When to the beautiful children, she instilled Palestinian roots in her children through sharing Palestinian recipes and stories that connect them with Palestine. She is an ardent runner, having at 70 plus years old, run the half marathons and won first prize.

Hummus Fatteh (V)

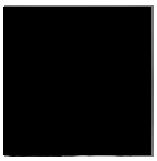
Fatteh hummus is one of my favorite childhood dishes and reminds me of family gatherings at home in Burqa surrounded by relatives. The vegetables and herbs were always freshly picked from the garden, offering that aromatic freshness to the recipe every single time.

Serves 4

1¼ cups (300 grams) of dried chickpeas or 2 cans of chickpeas
¼ tsp (7.5 ml) baking soda (only if using dried chickpeas)
2 cups (500 grams) of Greek-style yogurt
Juice of a half lemon
2 cloves garlic
3 tbsp (50 ml) tahini sauce
Ground cumin
Salt, to taste
2 loaves of pita bread
Parsley, to garnish
Pine nuts, to garnish

Equipment: Deep casserole platter

1. Soak the dried chickpeas in water the night before. Add ¼ tsp of baking soda to the water. (Skip these previous steps if you are using canned chickpeas, which you can drain from the water in the can before use and wash in water.)
2. Wash the chickpeas very well the next day. Add them to a large cooking pot with enough water to cover and simmer them until tender, about 20 minutes. (Don't forget to skim off any scum/residue that appears on the top of water.) Retain the water in a bowl as you will use it later.
3. Add ½ cup of the cooked chickpeas, 2 tbsp of the yogurt, juice of a half lemon, garlic cloves, tahini, cumin, and salt (to taste) to a food processor and whisk.
4. Cut the bread into square, cube-like pieces and fry them in 4 tbsp of olive oil. Set aside on a paper napkin. Spread the fried bread in a deep serving platter (casserole is a good choice).
5. Soak the bread with some of the remaining water from the cooked chickpeas. Add the cooked chickpeas on top of the pita bread and add the yogurt sauce on top of the chickpeas. Sprinkle with more parsley and fried pine nuts.



ELIZABETH KASSIS, TV Host, Producer, Horse Breeder
Origin: Bethlehem / Residence: Santiago / @elizabethkassis

Elizabeth Kassis is a renowned Chilean-Palestinian business woman who divides her time between her passion for horses and her work in television as a TV host, producer, and conductor, while sitting on multiple corporate boards. Her current projects are also focused on Palestine.

Cucumber Salad (V)

I chose this salad because I am addicted to cucumbers. It is a recipe from my mother. My mum had Palestinian cucumber seeds and when it was in season this was my favorite salad by far. It is more than a salad for me; it is a journey to the past to remember my childhood and my relatives who are no longer here. But at the same time, it is very fresh salad that accompanies me the day-to-day of my present during hot afternoons in the Chilean summer.

Serves 4

3 cups (100 g) labaneh or Greek yogurt
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Juiced ½ lemon
½ clove of garlic, crushed
1 tsp (5 ml) dried mint leaves
2 tbsp (30 ml) fresh mint leaves
Finely grated lemon zest
6 small Arabic cucumbers
¼ red onion
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) salt (Himalayan salt is optional)
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper

1. With a egg whisk, in a large bowl, mix the yogurt, olive oil, lemon juice until all the ingredients are incorporated well.
2. Add the garlic, dried and chopped mint leaves, and a pinch of lemon zest.
3. Then chop the cucumber and half a cucumber lengthwise into cubes, then place the chopped cucumber in a colander with salt. Leave for 5 minutes to drain excess water. Finish with black pepper.
4. Mix the cucumber and onion into the yogurt mix.
5. Enjoy accompanied by a vegetable crudité and olives.

FADI KATTAN, Chef, Hotelier
Origin: Bethlehem / Residence: Bethlehem / @fadi.kattan

Fadi Kattan has worked in Paris, London, and Palestine on tourism development, marketing, sustainability, and strategy for large-scale economy promotion, and international tourism relations. Fadi comes from one of the oldest Christian families in Bethlehem, growing up in the Holy Land just off Star Street, its most famous boulevard. Fadi's inspiration comes from his grandmother's kitchen. She founded the Arab Women's Union in Bethlehem.

Freekeh Salad (V)

For thousands of years, before rice became the staple grain in Palestine, Palestinians used freekeh, that delicate harvested green wheat that packs so many health benefits into the hills of Palestine's landscape with its intense earthy, smoky flavor. Today, freekeh is coming back in force. We add it to salad, risotto, stuffed vegetables, or instead of rice next to a roast meat or chicken. This light freekeh recipe is full of the healthiness of the grain and seeds. The sumac and the black pine nut seeds give it a distinctive taste and a joy to the palate.

Serves 4

¼ lb (120 g) cracked freekeh
4 tbsp (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Water
7 oz (200 g) green onions
1 tsp (5 ml) sumac
¾ oz (20 g) fresh mint
¾ oz (20 g) parsley
1 lemon, juice
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
5 oz (150 g) pine nuts
5 oz (150 g) pine seeds
1 oz (30 g) walnuts

1. Soak the freekeh in cold water for 10 minutes. Rinse the freekeh and place in a sieve.
2. Heat the olive oil in a pan. Add the freekeh and turn with a wooden spoon for 2 minutes, releasing the smokiness of the freekeh. Cover with water and let simmer until water evaporates, approximately 30 minutes.
3. Once the freekeh is cooked, it has to retain a bit of crunch, so put it in a tray and let it cool at room temperature.
4. Chop finely the green onions. Place in a small bowl with olive oil to cover and add a pinch of sumac.
5. Chop finely the mint and parsley.
6. Make the dressing. In a separate bowl, combine the lemon juice, olive oil, and salt.
7. Delicately mix together the freekeh, pine seeds, pine nuts, walnuts, mint, parsley, and green onions.
8. Add the lemon juice with the salt and sumac. Mix in the dressing to the salad and serve.

LAMA BAZZARI, Impact Entrepreneur, Philanthropist
Originally from Nablus / Resident in Dubai / @lamabazzari

FARAH BAZZARI, Writer, Poet
Originally from Gaza / Resident in Dubai / @farahbazzari

Lama and Farah are sisters and co-authors, along with their mother, Lama, an impact entrepreneur and philanthropist, are co-founders of the Giving Palestine global fundraising movement and not-for-profit book

Bulgur Salad with Feta Cheese and Pesto (V)

Eating this delicious dish always conjures up feelings of home and lunches spent together laughing. After all, nothing bonds Palestinians like food does.

Serves 6

1 cup (250 grams) medium grind bulgur
1 cup (250 grams) quinoa
1¼ cups (300 grams) boiling water
¼ cup (60 grams) fresh coriander, chopped finely
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
1 medium tomato, diced
¼ cup (60 grams) fresh mint, chopped finely
¼ cup (60 grams) crumbled feta cheese
Handful of toasted hazelnuts, crushed into halves

For the Dressing
4 tbsp (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 small lemon, juice
Salt and pepper, to taste
Sumac, to taste

For the Pesto Sauce
½ cup (120 grams) pine nuts
¾ cup (180 grams) parmesan
2 garlic cloves
7 cups (1.7 litres) basil
1 cup (250 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1. Place the bulgur in a medium bowl and cover with boiling water. Top with a plate or plastic wrap and let sit until liquid is absorbed, about 15-20 minutes. If any liquid is left over, strain it out. Let the bulgur cool.
2. Combine water and quinoa in a sauce pan. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium high heat, then lower the heat to simmer for 5 minutes, and put the lid on. Cook until the quinoa has fully absorbed the water, total time around 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Make the dressing. In a serving bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, and salt and pepper.
4. Make the pesto sauce. Toast the pine nuts in a pan until golden. In a blender, grind together the cheese, garlic, and the toasted pine nuts. Add in the olive oil. Slowly add the olive oil while blending until mixture is smooth. Add a tablespoon of salt and a tablespoon of cold water for a smoother feel.
5. When cooled, add the bulgur and quinoa to the serving bowl and toss together with the dressing already in the bowl, then add the pesto sauce and combine fully.
6. Add in the coriander, onions, tomato, mint, hazelnuts, and feta. Gently toss everything together until combined. Season with salt and pepper and add in sumac spice, as needed. Extra garnish can include a handful of raisins and pomegranate seeds (optional).

Note: You can substitute in ready-made pesto sauce.

NOOR WAZWAZ, Producer, Storyteller
Originally from / Resides in New York / @nwazwaz

Noor Wazwaz is a Palestinian-American storyteller and producer based in New York City. Noor's love for stories and cooking comes from her mom, Abeer, who taught her everything she knows about food and life.

Abeer's Eggplant Salad (V)

My mother, Abeer, never lived in Palestine. You can get a taste of her upbringing in the meals she cooks, often melding the familiar with a multinational twist. Her creativity and fearlessness extend into her cooking. She was always experimenting and whipping up a new tasty creation, like this eggplant salad, which I loved.

Serves 4

3 large eggplants, washed
Salt
2 cups (.5 liters) canola oil
1 pita bread, cut into diamond shapes
1 medium-size pomegranate, seeded
A large bunch of cilantro, chopped
8 oz (225 g) sliced roasted bell pepper strips, diced

For the Dressing
2 tbsp (30 ml) pomegranate molasses
Juiced 2 limes
3 tbsp (50 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp (15 ml) sumac
3 garlic cloves, thinly chopped
Salt, to taste

1 Using a vegetable peeler, peel half of the eggplant. (Be sure to keep some skin.) Cut the eggplant into ¼-inch cubes. Put the eggplant into a medium bowl, and sprinkle salt. Leave the eggplant to rest aside for 15–20 minutes.

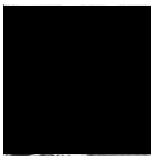
2 Meanwhile, begin preparing the dressing. In a separate bowl, whisk the pomegranate molasses, lime juice, olive oil, sumac, and garlic. Add salt to taste.

3 Pour 1 cup of canola oil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add the pita bread and fry over moderately high heat, stirring until lightly golden brown. Transfer the bread to a paper towel–lined baking sheet to drain.

4 Now it's time to fry the eggplant. You may need to add more canola oil into the saucepan. Add half of the eggplant and fry over moderately high heat, stirring until it is lightly browned, 7–10 minutes. Set the eggplant aside on paper towels to drain any excess oil. Repeat with the remaining eggplant.

5 In a serving tray, layer all the ingredients on top of each other. Start with the bread. Add the eggplant and then the roasted bell peppers. Sprinkle the pomegranate seeds and cilantro. And in a rainbow, drizzle the dressing over the salad evenly. (Note: Make sure you whisk the dressing before pouring so that it is nice and smooth.)

6 Cover the tray and place in the fridge for about 1 hour before serving.



MAKADRKAKS, Food Blogger, Writer
Originally from Jerusalem / Resident of Chicago / @almondandfig

MAKADRKAKS is the writer behind the popular food blog Almond & Fig. She considers herself a place she can call home and a past that connects to Palestine on the other side.

Maftoul Fall Salad (V)

My recipe inspiration comes from my grandmother who always hand-rolled her own maftoul.

Serves 6

2 purple onions, cut into wedges
2 cups (.5 liters) chopped and peeled small butternut squash (seeds removed)
2 cups (.5 liters) fresh radicchio, chopped, or arugula
1 red or yellow bell pepper, sliced
1 cup (.25 liters) cooked baby carrots (can be left whole, too)
1 small sweet potato, peeled and cubed
9 oz Palestinian fair trade maftoul
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped pistachios (reserve 1 tbsp to garnish the top)
1 tsp (5 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
5 cups (1.2 liters) water or chicken broth

For the Dressing
Juice of 1 lemon
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 tsp (5 ml) dijon mustard
Salt, to taste
1 garlic clove, finely minced

Equipment: Double boiler

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C (425°F).
2. Add the cut veggies to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper. Toss to combine. Roast for 30-45 minutes until veggies are caramelized and cooked.
3. Add water or broth to the bottom pan of the double boiler with the aromatics, if using.
4. Brush the bottom and sides of the colander with olive oil so that maftoul does not stick to the colander. Make sure the bottom of the colander does not touch the water.
5. Add the raw maftoul to the oiled colander. Bring the pot to a boil. Cover and let the steam cook the maftoul. After 8 minutes of cooking, give the maftoul a gentle toss. Cook until maftoul is fluffy and cooked through, about 15-25 minutes. If fluffy when ready, set aside to cool.
6. Whisk dressing ingredients in a mason jar to combine.
7. To assemble the salad: In a large bowl, add the roasted veggies to the cooked maftoul. Add the dressing, radicchio, pistachios, and fresh salad to combine. Garnish with the reserved pistachios (optional). Serve at room temperature.

Note: For additional flavor, add aromatics if using water (1 cinnamon stick, 5 peppercorns, 1 bay leaf, 5 cardamom pods, 5 whole allspice).

MOAYAD ALI, Chef, Restaurateur, Master Chef Judge for Palestine Arab Association
Origin: Tulkarm / Residence: Tulkarm / @palestinian_chef_moayad_ali

Chef Moayad Ali is recognized as the UK's premier chef. He's worked alongside several top chefs, including Gordon Ramsey, and is a regular contributor on TV. His restaurant, La Maison des Fenêtres, Palestinian cuisine using the freshest Palestinian ingredients and his mother's traditional techniques as his inspiration.

Large Couscous and Green Lentil Salad (V)

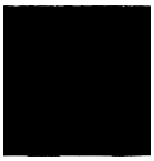
Coming home to homemade mafoul during winter days brings so back many childhood memories. My mother would sit on the floor chatting with neighbors and making mafoul while the dish could be smelled from a mile away. This dish is inspired by my mother's mafoul and years of my travels creating a wholesome couscous and lentil dish using local ingredients.

Serves 2-4

1 lb (½ kg) large couscous
1 lb (½ kg) green lentils (washed)
2 quarts (2 liters) water
1 bay leaf
½ cup (50 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Juiced 2 lemons
½ bunch dill, parsley and coriander, roughly chopped
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
Salt and pepper, to taste
1.5 oz (50 g) dried cranberries
1.5 oz (50 g) roasted almonds
50 g roasted hazelnuts

1. In a medium pot, place lentils, bay leaf, and water. Bring to a boil, reduce, and simmer for 20 minutes.
2. Boil 1½ liter water and stir in the couscous. Remove from the stove. Cover and rest for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork.
3. Strain and cool down both the lentils and couscous until it is fully cold (not be cooked and cold).
4. Add both the couscous and lentils into a medium bowl and combine.
5. Add all the ingredients in the same bowl and mix well.
6. Serve cold and garnish with extra nuts or cranberries, as desired.

Note: You can substitute large couscous with Palestinian mafoul for this salad.



LISA SHARMAJI, Writer, Editor, Poet
Origin: Jerusalem / Residence: Cyprus / @lisasharmaji

Lisa Sharmaji is a Palestinian-American poet and scholar. She was awarded the Edith Shiffers Annual Poetry Prize for her work Geographies of Light, and her critical writing has been published widely. Her Palestinian family is from Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Haifa, and she currently lives in Cyprus.

Tabbouleh Salad (V)

As a child growing up in Amman and making family visits to Jerusalem, one of my favorite dishes was tabbouleh—prepared exquisitely by my grandmother and various aunts. Much later, as a married mother myself with no time to cook, I vowed that my children would grow up thinking their ethnic cuisine was pasta and frozen green peas. So, I started making tabbouleh for them. Their love for it has ensured that the taste of Palestine will travel to future generations.

Serves 4

¼ cup (60 ml) hot water (to cook bulgur)
¼ cup (60 ml) fine bulgur
2 large bunches (1½ cups, 375 g) fine-stemmed flat-leaf parsley
½ cup (120 ml) fresh mint leaves
4 spring onions or 1 dry white onion, finely diced
1–2 large tomatoes, diced

For the Dressing
½ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Juiced 2–3 large lemons (about ½ cup, 120 ml)
Salt and pepper, to taste
½ garlic clove, crushed (optional)
1 tbsp (15 ml) sumac (optional)

For the Garnish (optional)
8–10 small, tender lettuce leaves
Handful of pomegranate seeds

1. Pour hot water over bulgur to cover and leave to soak, 7 minutes. Stir, then set aside until the bulgur has absorbed the liquid. If there is any liquid left, drain bulgur well and squeeze to remove all water. Set aside to cool.
2. Wash parsley well and remove leaves from stems. Chop very finely. Chop mint leaves finely. Mix green or white onions finely. Dice tomatoes finely.
3. Place ingredients in large bowl. Add bulgur.
4. Make the dressing. Combine olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, sumac (optional), and garlic (optional) and pour over tabbouleh ingredients. Toss gently.
5. To serve, arrange lettuce leaves around the inside edge of the bowl, stem side down (optional), and garnish with a handful of pomegranate seeds (optional).

SAMIR HULEIHEL, Businessman
Original Home: Jaffa, Jericho / Residence: Ramallah

Samir is the executive officer of Palestine Development and Investment, Ltd. (PADICO). He represents PADICO on several boards of subsidiary companies. He is also chairman of Jericho Gate Real Estate Investment.

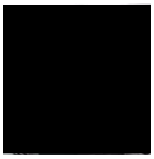
Mish Salad (V)

This old salad recipe is hundreds of years old. As there was no way to refrigerate yogurt (laban), Palestinian farmers searched for a way to preserve it differently than the Bedouin method of salting the yogurt and drying it. The mish method was close to the one Egyptians used for mish cheese. The original method is to add a lot of salt to the yogurt, then add garlic, peeled lemon, and hot pepper and leave to dry for a month or two. When eating, the density is diluted through adding some water, pieces of tomato, olive oil, and mint leaves.

Serves 4

1 cup (250 grams) laban (yogurt)
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
4 cloves garlic, peeled and finely crushed
1 hot chili pepper, chopped finely
¼ lemon, peeled and chopped
1 tbsp (15 ml) mint leaves
1 tomato, diced
1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1. Place the yogurt in a fine sieve, mix in the salt, and leave to drain for 15 minutes.
2. In a bowl, mix the yogurt, garlic, chili, and lemon. Cover and leave in the fridge overnight.
3. To serve, spread the mixture onto a plate. Decorate with the diced tomato, mint leaves, and olive oil.



ANNEMARIE JACIR, Writer, Director, Filmmaker
Original Bethlehem / Residence Haifa

OSAMA BAWARDI, Producer
Original Nazareth / Residence Haifa / @annemariejacir

Writer/director Annemarie Jacir and producer Osama Bawardi have been working together for more than a decade. They first met in Ramallah during the production of Annemarie's first feature film Salt of this Sea, and since then they have brought to screen many stories, including Like Twenty Impossible Years, When I Saw You, In Between Dying, Wajib, and many other highly acclaimed films.

Fresh Figs Salad (V)

Palestinian figs while in season in the summer are heavenly, picked and eaten directly off a fig tree or combined into this easy to make healthy fresh summer salad.

Serves 2-4

1 cup (250 liters) spinach leaves
1 cup (250 liters) lamb's lettuce (Baby)
1 cup (250 liters) fresh za'atar leaves
1 cup (250 liters) spring onions, chopped finely
12 fresh figs, cut into quarters
½ cup (120 ml) Palestinian Sarkish or feta cheese, crumbled
½ cup (120 ml) pomegranate seeds
¼ cup (60 ml) halved walnuts
¼ cup seedless black olives, sliced in half (optional)

For the Dressing
8 tbsp (120 ml) extra virgin olive oil
4 tbsp (60 ml) pomegranate molasses
Salt, to taste
½ clove garlic, crushed

1 Wash the green leaves thoroughly and allow to air dry.

2 Place and combine with the fresh za'atar leaves, spring onions, black olives, halved walnuts. Add the fresh figs, crumbled cheese and walnuts.

3 Combine all dressing ingredients in a separate bowl and mix well. Set aside.

4 Drizzle salad with dressing to combine. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds (optional).

Note: Can substitute Sarkish cheese with any white cheese of your liking.

AMIRA MOUSA, PaliRoots Mom
Origin: Timoun ya / Residence: San Diego / @PaliRoots

Founded in 2016, the PaliRoots mission is to bring awareness to the world about Palestinian culture by crafting specialty products inspired by its people and identity

Tahini Salad (V)

My tahini salad recipe is simple but delicious. When I moved from Spain to Palestine, I lived with my grandma, who always used to make it with makloubah or put it in my falafel sandwich. My son, Hussein (founder of PaliRoots), helps me make this recipe and loves it in his food. This delicious salad is found throughout all of Palestine and is a healthy addition to any meal.

Serves 4

2 cups (.5 liters) small diced tomatoes
1½ cups (.35 liters) small diced cucumbers
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped parsley
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped mint
5 tbsp (75 ml) tahini
2 tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ cup (120 ml) water
1 clove garlic, crushed

1. Rinse and dice tomatoes, cucumbers, and parsley. Mix tomatoes and cucumbers into small diced pieces and roughly chop the parsley and mint. Mix all together in a bowl.
2. In a separate bowl, mix together the tahini, lemon juice, salt, water, and crushed garlic.
3. Fold in both mixtures in one bowl until fully combined. Add more salt if needed. Serve cold

Note: Adjust tahini quantity as desired for this salad

JERUSALEM

HAZAR KILOIAN, Chef, Entrepreneur, Food Influencer, Medical Technician
Origin: Nablus / Residence: Ramallah / @chefhazarkiloian

Hazar Kiloian is a passionate chef, photographer, and entrepreneur with a bachelor's degree in Medical Analysis from Jordan University. She inherited her love of food from her mother, a passion that showed itself in 2010 when she began taking different dishes from different cuisines in an effort to innovate them and add her personal touch.

Zucchini and Spinach Gratin (V)

The idea of this dish came from the traditional potato gratin recipe. Here I made a new type of gratin with fewer carbs to help our health de program. It's delicious. Also, it's good for those who don't like the taste of zucchini but get all the minerals and vitamins out of this very useful type of vegetable.

Serves 4–6

1 lb. (.5 kg) zucchini, thinly sliced
2 tbsp. (30 ml) butter, crushed
3 cloves garlic
.6 lbs. (300 g) fresh chopped spinach
1 cup (.25 liters) cooking cream, room temperature
1 cup (.25 liters) Italian mixed cheese (can be replaced with shredded parmesan)
Salt, pepper, and nutmeg to taste
1 cup (.25 liters) halloumi cheese (can be replaced with shredded mozzarella)

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In a medium pan, boil the zucchini until it becomes soft and tender. Drain the zucchini slices well on paper towels. Arrange the cooked zucchini in a casserole dish.
3. In a saucepan on medium-high heat, add the butter and garlic and cook it for 2 minutes. Add spinach and stir until the spinach cooks down. Then add the cream and Italian mixed cheese. Season with salt, black pepper and nutmeg.
4. Pour this mixture over the zucchini in the casserole. Distribute the halloumi cheese (or mozzarella) on the surface.
5. Bake in the preheated oven to cook the sauce slightly, about 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and serve hot.

MAYA ABU-ALKAILA, Journalist, TV Presenter, Producer
Origin: Abu Dis, Jerusalem / Residence: Bakersfield
@mayaalkaila

A proud mother and wife, Maya worked at NBC TV channel for 17 years as a reporter, then presenter and producer, for the mother-and-child segment of the morning show. She now dedicates her time to her family and children. Traveling was and still is her passion, and she carries with her proudly her traditions as a Palestinian.

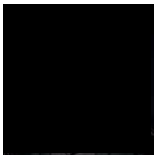
Zucchini Marrow (V)

My mother, Enid Brown, is an English rose better known as Um Ali. She married my father, Marwan Abu-Alkaila, a Palestinian military officer, and moved to the Middle East. Thanks to my grandmother, my mother learned how to speak Arabic and also how to cook wonderful Palestinian dishes, such as zucchini marrow, which is one of my favorite dishes. Like it did with me, I want these Palestinian roots to grow deep with my own daughter. As the late Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, said, "On this land, there is a life worth living for."

Serves 4–6

1 small yellow onion, chopped finely
1 tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
Inside (the stuff of dreams) of all zucchinis, chopped
1 tbsp (15 ml) dried mint
¼ tsp (1 ml) nutmeg
Salt and pepper, to taste
½ a lemon juice
1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1. In a medium sauté pan, cook chopped onion in vegetable oil until brown, then add the crushed garlic.
2. Add the zucchini insides and add the dried mint, nutmeg, and salt and pepper, and leave covered on low heat for 15 minutes.
3. Finally, add the lemon and some olive oil. Serve cold as a side dish or drizzle and enjoy it with pita bread.



CHEF RANIA AL-KHAZAL, Author, Speaker
Originally from Tarshiha / Resident of New York / @chefraniakhazal

Chef Rania Al-Khazal was born in a Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon. As a young girl, she started in the Palestinian film industry as a Chef, one of the rare jobs for women at the time. She is the former director of the Palestinian Hotel Association, and is the author of the cookbook Recipes and Confessions of a War Child. Chef Rania was ranked first by Arabian Business magazine in the 100 Most Powerful Arabs Under 40 and Esquire magazine's Man of the Year.

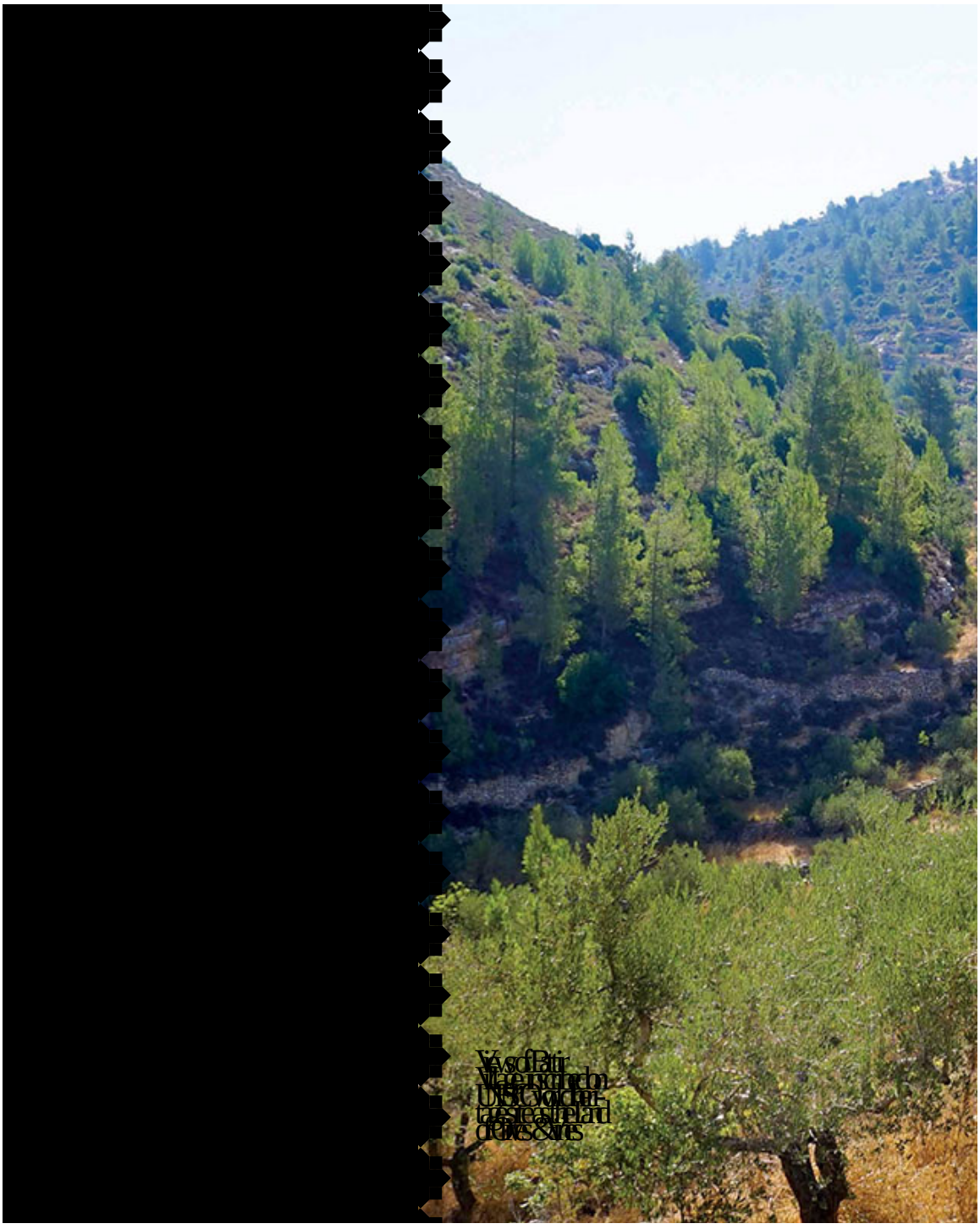
Spicy Potatoes – Batata Harra (V)

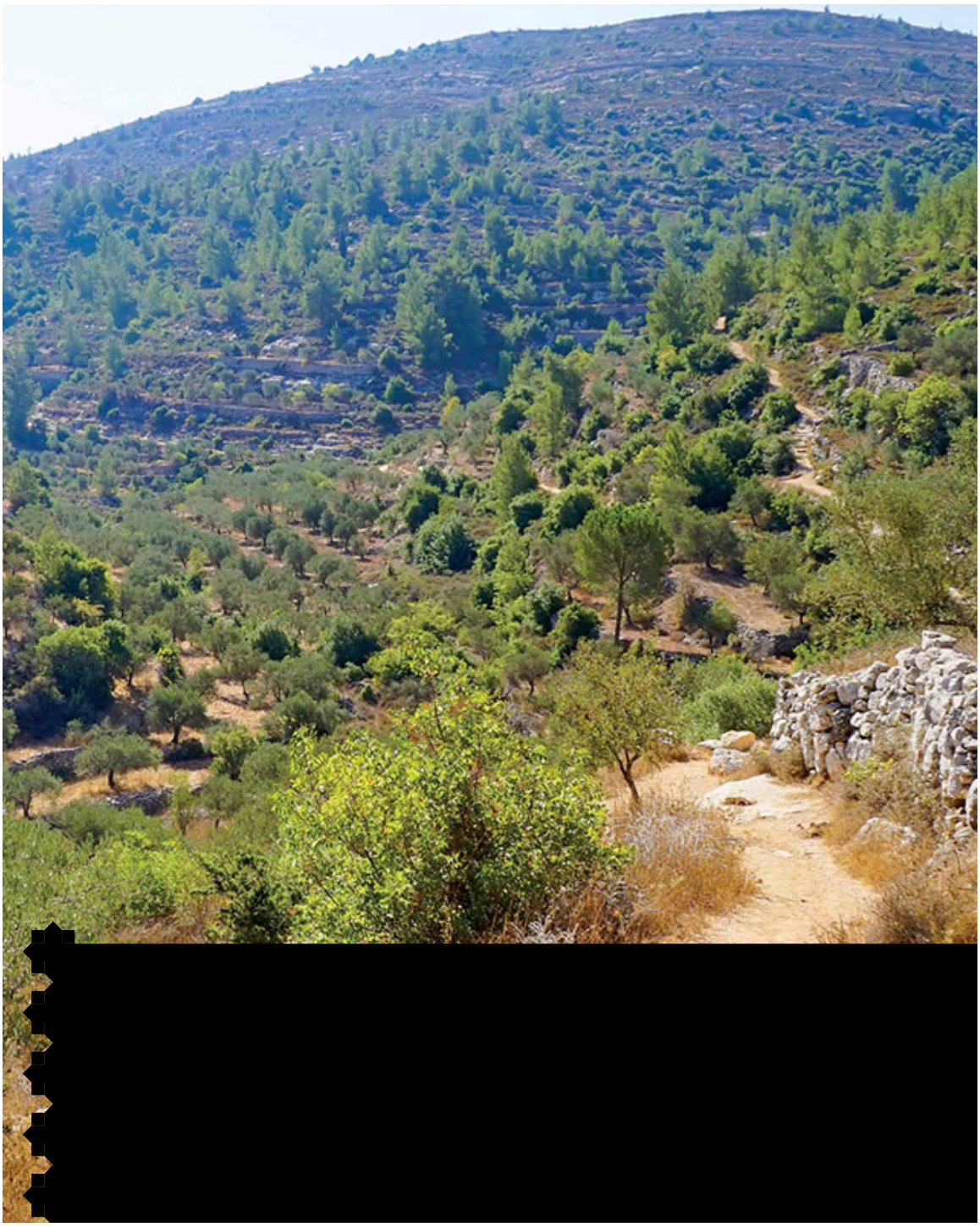
My Batata Harra is a re-imagination of French fries with a Palestinian twist. For a single guy with a hectic work schedule and limited cooking skills, it is a necessary fast dish to prepare.

Serves 6

2 lbs (1 kg) potatoes
Frying oil
2 bunches fresh coriander
4 cloves garlic
Juice of ½ a lemon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) mild paprika
Parsley for garnish (optional)

1. Wash the potatoes, then soak them for 30 minutes in water and some salt and dry.
2. Peel and cut potatoes into medium-size cubes. In a large pan on medium heat, fry the cubed potatoes until they become crispy and golden brown, then set aside.
3. Wash and chop fresh coriander.
4. Mash garlic cloves. In a separate small pan, fry the garlic along with fresh coriander for about 2 minutes.
5. Add juice of half a lemon, salt, and paprika.
6. Pour the sauce over fried potatoes, mix, and serve.
7. Garnish with fresh chopped coriander or parsley (optional). Accompany with a thin yogurt dip or serve as a side next to an entrée.





YASMIN DAS, Fashion Blogger
Originally from / Resides in: Gaza / @yasmindas

Yasmin Das is the creator of Palestinian fashion blog based in Palestine. Yasmin became a regular at international fashion weeks and recently earned the title of 'Most Influential Blogger' by Style Magazine. She was named one of the best street styles in London fashion week by Gaza UK's Refinery29. Yasmin now works with leading international fashion, lifestyle, and travel brands around the world.

Lentil Soup (V)

My love and connections to this recipe started when I wasn't feeling well and my mom cooked this dish for me to help me get better. Lentil soup is very healthy, it really helped me and I felt better in a manner of hours. This is traditional recipe made of love, care, and comfort, and it will always remind me of my mom and family love.

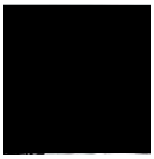
Serves: 6

½ cup (120 ml) split orange lentils, washed
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fine sea salt
1 large onion, chopped
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cumin
Pinch of cumin
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground black pepper
3 cups (.75 liters) water
½ cup (120 ml) chicken stock
1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice

For the Garnish
Toasted pita bread pieces
Toasted pumpkin seeds
Finely chopped fresh dill

Equipment: Hand blender

1. Soak the lentils in water for 20 minutes before cooking.
2. In a soup pot over medium heat, add olive oil, onion, and salt. Cook for 7-10 minutes or until onion is soft and translucent, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in the spices, then add the washed lentils, fresh water, and chicken stock. Increase heat until the soup begins to boil, then reduce to medium heat, cover, and allow to cook for 15 minutes.
4. Remove cover, and stir well, then cover with lid again and cook on low heat for another 15 minutes. Remove lid and stir every few minutes so grains don't stick to the base of the pan.
5. Transfer soup to a medium-large non-metallic bowl and puree the soup with a hand blender. Stir in the lemon juice and serve with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of ground cumin. Optional: Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds, toasted pita bread pieces, or fresh dill.



FADI KATTAN, Chef, Hotelier
Origin: Bethlehem / Residence: Bethlehem / @fadi.kattan

After 15 years in the hotel management business, Fadi Kattan, influenced by the ever-changing situation in Palestine, decided to go back to his passion, the kitchen. Fadi started his Levantine restaurant in 2016. He creates cuisine honoring Palestine's best produce with a modern twist.

Squash Cream with Laban Jameed (V)

This simple warming recipe came about when one of my favorite farmers, Mahmoud, arrived one morning with fantastic squashes from his lands south of Bethlehem. The flesh was so tasty as it was, so we came up with this extremely simple cream that needs no addition. The laban jameed and pine seeds supplement it with a very Palestinian flavor.

Serves 6

3 lbs (1.5 kg) squash with rinds still on
2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
¼ tsp (1 ml) white pepper
5 cups (1.2 liters) water
½ cup (120 ml) laban jameed
2 tsp (10 ml) pine seeds

Equipment: Hand Blender

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Cut the squash into 1-inch (2 cm) by 2-inch (5 cm) slices. Rub the squash with the olive oil, salt, and pepper.
3. Cook in the oven until cooked but not golden, around 25 minutes. Set aside a few pieces for decoration. Remove with a knife all the rinds from the other pieces.
4. Place with the water in a pot on low heat. Bring to a boil and cook for 10 minutes.
5. Remove from the pot and blend with a hand blender. Once blended, reserve until serving.
6. Plating: Place a ladle of the cream in the middle of a soup bowl. Garnish with a few pine seeds in the middle and serve with a chunk of roasted squash. Grate some fresh laban jameed on top.

NIMAT SHUHABAR, Entrepreneur
Origin: Jaffa, Gaza / Residence: Dubai / @nimats

Born to Palestinian parents and UK-raised, Nimat founded a Dubai-based events management boutique, Polka Dots & Ribbons, that tailor-makes bespoke events. She is married to Bader Al Adoni and is mother of a baby girl, Layla.

Freekeh Soup

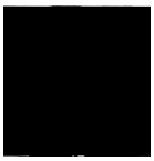
My freekeh soup recipe was inspired by my mother, Amal Shuhabar. Growing up in the UK, she always ensured that we had Arabic food on the table for lunch and dinner to stay connected to our roots. More frequently than not, this included a big bowl of freekeh soup. It reminds me of my childhood and is a delicious recipe that includes a Middle Eastern superfood ingredient. Now, as another mother myself, freekeh soup is once again a staple dish in our household. It is filling and nutritious, and my family often has it as a meal on its own.

Serves 4

1½ cup (350 g) freekeh (can use up to 2 cups if prefer more freekeh)
2 large pieces chicken breast
½ medium yellow onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
½ tsp (2.5 ml) nutmeg
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cinnamon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin
Salt and black pepper, to taste
6 cups (1.4 liters) water or chicken broth (ready-made or store-bought)
Lemon juice, to taste

For the Garnish
Lemon, to taste
Chopped flat-leaf parsley

1. Wash freekeh in a colander and then soak in 3 cups of water for 15 minutes. Set aside.
2. Clean the chicken breast. Cut each piece in half and then into long slices.
3. In a medium pot on medium heat, fry the chopped onion and crushed garlic with a little olive oil until a slight brown.
4. Add the chicken to the onion and garlic and cook until lightly golden brown. Add the nutmeg, cinnamon, and cumin to the chicken while cooking, as well as salt and pepper (amount as desired).
5. Add the drained freekeh to the chicken. Stir to allow heat for approximately 10 seconds. Add the boiling water to cover the freekeh by a finger's width and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium and cover the pot. Let it simmer for about 40 minutes to 1 hour until chicken and freekeh are cooked.
6. Be sure to check on freekeh in 20 minutes and occasionally thereafter to make sure it does not burn. If it is slightly watery or sticky, you may need to add more water to it to make it soft. Cook until it is soft and chicken is fully cooked.
7. Once ready, pour into a bowl, squeeze lemon, and serve warm.



Mona Al Marri, Tech Entrepreneur, CEO
Originally from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia / Resident of Dubai / @monazworld

Mona Al Marri, CEO and founder of Monazworld.com, is one of the Middle East's most prominent women entrepreneurs. Monazworld.com is a website platform that helps people to plan, prepare, cook and share delicious meals from around the world. Launched in 2012, Monazworld.com has helped more than 2.5 million people across the region in eight years.

Vegetables and Chickpeas Stew (V)

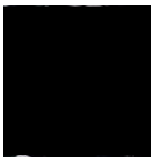
This is a family recipe from my childhood with memories of warm family gatherings in winter. This is a stew that is healthy, filling and has a lasting feel-good appeal.

Serves 4–6

3 cloves garlic, smashed with skin on
2 red onions
1–2 tbsp (15–30 ml) olive oil
1 yellow bell pepper, chopped small
1 green bell pepper, chopped small
2 cups (5 liters) butternut squash, cubed medium size
2 small zucchinis, sliced
3 potatoes, peeled and chopped into medium size cubes
1 cup (25 liters) baby carrots
Sea salt and black pepper, to taste
4 tbsp chopped herbs
½ cup (120 ml) vegetable stock
1 large bottle organic tomato sauce
1 small can tomato paste
2 tomatoes, sliced keys small
1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1 can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
¼ cup (60 ml) fresh ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) seven spices

For the Garnish
1 tbsp olive oil, flaky sea salt, herbs

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. In a deep pot, fry the garlic and onions in the olive oil until slightly fried.
3. Add the cut veggies and add a little more olive oil, some sea salt, black pepper, and chopped herbs of choice. Cook on medium heat until the vegetables are half cooked, 5–7 minutes. Add ¼ cup vegetable stock.
4. Add tomato sauce, tomato paste, finely chopped tomatoes, chickpeas, and red kidney beans. Let simmer on low heat for another 3 minutes.
5. Season as needed with additional herbs and allow to simmer for about 2 minutes. Add in final ¼ cup vegetable stock and stir through to taste.
6. After 5 minutes of stovetop simmering, place the pot in the oven and cook for an additional 25–30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender.
7. Serve with some rice, freekeh, or quinoa on the side and green olives.
8. Garnish with a dash of flaky sea salt, 1 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil, 1 tbsp fresh oregano, mint and parsley on top of the stew before serving.



WISSAM NASSAR, Photographer
Original from Gaza City / Resides in Gaza City / @wissamgaza

Wissam is an international award-winning photographer and 2015 Pulitzer Prize finalist. His work documents life in Gaza during this time. His photographs have appeared in the New York Times, Washington Post, and Time magazine, along with other internationally recognized publications.

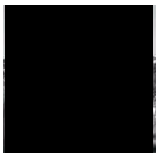
Gaza Sumakiyeh Stew

This recipe is one of my favorites growing up in Gaza and reminds me of family gatherings where we enjoy delicious food and great company.

Serves 6

- 300 g whole sumac
- 2 large or medium yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 1 cup (250 ml) vegetable oil
- 2 lbs (1 kg) veal meat, cubed into small cubes
- 9 lbs (4 kg) Plasrina or Swiss chard, chopped finely
- 1¼ cup chickpeas, boiled
- 1 tsp (5 ml) black pepper
- Salt, to taste
- 2 cups cilantro
- 1-3 green pepper, chopped finely
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) flour
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) cold water
- 4 tsp (20 ml) caraway seeds

1. Soak the sumac 12 hours ahead or the day before covered with water in a pot. Drain when done.
2. Boil in a medium sauce pan on low heat for 30 minutes, then strain well to get the juice of the sumac.
3. In a large pan, sauté the onions in oil until translucent.
4. Add the meat and sauté until browned, about 10 minutes.
5. Add the chard on high heat, stirring well until the chard wilts.
6. Add the sumac juice while stirring. Add the chickpeas and sauté them. Season with black pepper and salt. Pour in the vegetable broth.
7. Add the chopped pepper, then the chopped garlic.
8. Dilute the flour with cold water, then add gradually to the sauce pan while stirring to get a good form.
9. Pour on serving plates. Garnish with sumac spice and caraway seeds (optional). Serve cold.



NAZMI AL-JUBEH, PhD, Professor, Director
Original Jerusalemite / Resident Jerusalemite

Nazmi Jubeh, PhD, is associate professor of history and archaeology at Birzeit University, the director of Birzeit University Museum in Palestine. He was formerly the co-director of Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation in Ramallah (1992–2001). He was also the director of the Islamic Museum in Al-Aqsa Mosque (1993–1994). Nazmi has published several books and a large number of articles on history, archaeology, politics, and architecture.

Stuffed Zucchini with Yogurt

Cooked yogurt plays a central role in the Palestinian cuisine. In the pre-fridge era, dry yogurt was considered a basic supply of the components of the home store. My father used to buy a large quantity of dry yogurt (laban janeef) every spring enough for the whole year. Cooked yogurt is included in preparing mansaf, stuffed zucchini, stuffed eggplant, and many other Palestinian traditional dishes.

Serves 4

- 300 g mince meat
- 1 cup (100 g) white onion
- 2 tsp (10 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- ¾ cup (50 g) pine nuts
- Salt, to taste
- Black and white pepper, to taste
- 1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon
- 1 tsp (5 ml) cardamom
- 12 free zucchini, cored
- 8½ cups (2 litres) yogurt (or dry the yogurt)
- 1 cup (150 grams) white long grain rice

For the Garnish

- Handful pine nuts (optional)
- Sprinkled mint (optional)

1. In a medium pan over medium heat, roast the meat and the onion with 2 tsp olive oil until evenly browned, 15–20 minutes.
2. In a small pan, roast the pine nuts with 1/2 tsp olive oil until golden brown.
3. In the same pan, mix the roasted meat and onion with the black and white pepper, salt, cinnamon, and cardamom. When well-mixed, add the roasted pine nuts.
4. Fill the cored zucchini with the mix. In a new pan over medium heat, roast the filled zucchini in ¼ tsp olive oil until browned.
5. In a separate medium-size pot, cook the yogurt on low heat and keep moving it with a spoon so it will not crystalize. When the yogurt reaches the level of the original yogurt (thick), add the filled zucchini to the same pot. Cook it all for 20 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, the rice can be prepared in any way that you like.
7. To serve, put the rice in the dish to be served with the zucchini and be sure that it contains enough sauce. Garnish with pine nuts or mint, optional.

KARIM KATTAN, Writer
Originally from Bethlehem / Resides in Paris / @karim.kattan

Karim Kattan is a writer with roots in Bethlehem and Paris, where he is completing a PhD in comparative literature. In 2014, he co-founded e-AIR, an international residency in Jericho for artists and writers. His first collection of short stories, *Préliminaires pour un vaste futur*, was published in 2017 by Elyzad.

Jute Mallow Stew – Mloukhia

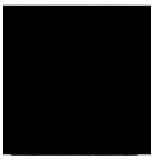
Mloukhia is one of the most special and unusual dishes you could find on Sundays. It was the pharaohs' favorite dish. Others argue that angels are particularly fond of it. Regardless whether dropped or not, dark or light green, whether lamb, chicken or rabbit, mloukhia is sure to be an unexpected delight every time you cook it and every time you are lucky enough to taste it. It is, as the name implies, truly the dish of kings.

Serves 6

- 4 tbsp (20 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 lbs (1 kg) lamb meat cut in large cubes
- 2 tsp (10 ml) salt
- ½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground coriander
- 1 cardamom pod
- 1 tsp (5 ml) pepper
- 2½ cups water
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 bunch fresh coriander, chopped finely
- 2 lbs (1 kg) mloukia, fresh or dried
- 1 medium tomato
- 1 lemon juice
- 2 large Arabic bread, cut into triangles
- 1 medium onion, chopped finely
- Juice of 3 lemons

1. In a large pot, heat half the olive oil, add the meat and spices, and sear for about 5 minutes, stirring. Cover with the water and cook on low heat for 1 hour.
2. In a small pan, heat the remaining olive oil and cook the crushed garlic and coriander leaves until slightly crispy.
3. In the large pot, add a bit of water if the level is not covering the meat. If using dried mloukia, rinse thoroughly; if using fresh mloukia, destem the leaves and chop roughly.
4. Pour in the garlic and coriander, the whole tomato, and the mloukia. Cook on medium heat for 5 minutes.
5. In a pan, fry the Palestinian bread (cut into triangles) until golden.
6. Chop the onion very thinly. In a small bowl, mix with the lemon juice. Set aside.
7. To serve, add some rice in a plate, cover with the bread croutons, the mloukia with meat in a bowl on the side, and the lemon onion dressing to be added by each guest to their liking.

Note: Fresh mloukia can be bought in season. Substitute with frozen mloukia, which can be bought from a Middle Eastern supermarket.



ZEINAB ATAYA, Philanthropist
Originally from Bethlehem / Resides in Lisbon

Zeinab Ataya is a Palestinian philanthropist living in Lisbon, Portugal. She supports Palestinian culture through many cultural and artistic ventures.

Drunken Meat

This heartwarming meal always reminds me of my grandparents' home in Bethlehem and my parents' house in Amman, where delicious meals were prepared by my mother, and we children gathered with my father, Pasha Tewfiq Ataya, to enjoy the flavors of our cuisine.

Serves 4

3 tsp (15 ml) seven-spice mix
1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) nutmeg
1 tsp (5 ml) black pepper
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
2 lbs (1 kg) fillet meat, cut into large cubes (chicken pieces with bone can be used instead of meat)
¼ cup (60 ml) vegetable oil
1 tbsp (15 ml) ghee (clarified butter)
2 cups (.5 liters) red wine, the best quality that you can get (can be substituted with vinegar)
2 heads of garlic, peeled
1 cup (.25 liters) chicken stock

1. Mix together the spices into a dry rub and cover the meat with it.
2. In a large pan over high heat, add vegetable oil and ghee. Heat and fry the spiced meat pieces, until browned. Searing of the meat is very important, to keep the meat tender.
3. Add the wine, garlic, stock, and enough water to cover the meat.
4. Cover the pan and cook over very low heat for 2 hours, or until the meat is tender.
5. Uncover the pot when the meat is cooked to help the evaporation and thickening of the sauce. Serve with a side of rice or roasted or mashed potatoes.

NAOMI SHIHAB NYE, Poet, Writer
Originally from Jerusalem / Resident of San Antonio / @naomishihabnye

Acclaimed poet and writer, Naomi Shihab Nye is the Young People's Poet Laureate of the United States for 2019-2021 (sponsored by the Poetry Foundation, Chicago). Her most recent books are *The Tiny Journalist*, Voices in the Air: Poems for Listeners, and *The Turkey Girl*. She has been a visiting writer at hundreds of venues for many years, and lives in San Antonio, Texas.

Happy House Lentil Stew (V)

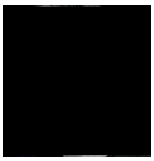
Delicious vegetarian meals remind me of my Palestinian father's loving thriftiness and how both my parents always tried to accommodate my refusal to eat meat. Meat was dead animals. My father, Aziz Shihab, always said my Palestinian grandmother was living a long time because she had not eaten much meat when they were young and refugees and barely making do. This sounded right to me. Eat less dead ness and stay alive longer. This recipe was favored by my dad and was featured in his cookbook, A Taste of Palestine: Menus and Memories, in which he favored simple recipes.

Serves 4–6

1 cup (225 grams) lentils
½ lb (225 g) zucchini, sliced or chopped
½ lb (225 g) leeks, trimmed and sliced
1 stalk celery, sliced
2 red potatoes, peeled and diced
2–4 cloves garlic, crushed
1 onion, finely chopped
2–4 tbsp (30–60 ml) parsley, finely chopped
Juice of 2 lemons
Salt, black pepper, cinnamon, to taste
A little extra-virgin olive oil

For the Garnish
Crumbled feta cheese
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Simmer rinsed lentils in a large pan in 3½ cups water for about 1 hour or more. Add the zucchini, leeks, celery, and potatoes, and season with salt, pepper, and a little cinnamon. Continue cooking for 20 minutes longer, until flavors meld together. Add more water if necessary. Only a little liquid should be left after cooking, so it's more like stew than soup.
2. In a separate pan, fry the onion in olive oil until soft and golden, and add garlic as it cooks. Drain and add to stew, with lemon juice and parsley. Simmer for a few more minutes to mingle flavors. Adjust seasoning to taste.
3. Serve hot or cold with crumbled feta cheese on top.



MOHAMED HADID Real Estate Developer, Artist
Original Nazareth, Safad / Residence Los Angeles / @mohamedhadid

As a successful real estate developer, Mohamed Hadid has offered unsurpassed vision and development acument to the world developing and building unique office developments, residential and hotel developments. He created his development and real estate work to reflect the opulent estates in Aspen, Mexico, and Beverly Hills, California, and is currently at date time that is building the largest residential complex in the world in Cairo, Egypt.

Okra Stew – Bamyeh

This dish is my favorite family recipe, passed down through generations of Daher and Hadid family members in Nazareth and Safad. It always transports me back to my mother Kamia Daher's kitchen every time I eat it. She used to cook over 10 delicious dishes at a time as a way to bring the whole family together. I have taught this recipe to my kids – Mireille, Anan, Gigi, Bella, and Anwar – as a way to connect them with our delicious Palestinian food, rich history, roots, and culture. May you in return, enjoy this special dish from our family to yours.

Serves 4

6 tbsp (100 ml) olive oil
1 lb (½ kg) lamb meat, cut in cubes
2 small onions
2 lbs (1 kg) bamyeh (small okra)
2 garlic cloves
1 tbsp (15 ml) coriander seeds
½ lb (250 g) tomatoes
3 tbsp (50 ml) tomato paste
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) pepper
1 bunch fresh coriander

1 In a large pot over medium high heat, heat 4 tbsp olive oil. Brown the meat until all sides are browned.

2 Chop the onions, add to the meat, and continue cooking until onions are translucent.

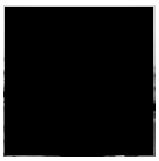
3 Remove the stems of the okra, then add to the pot and stir fry.

4 Add in chopped garlic, coriander pods, and tomatoes.

5 Dilute the tomato paste with a bit of warm water and the lemon juice. Add to the pot and stir well. Add salt and pepper to taste.

6 Cover and keep cooking for 1 hour, until meat and okra are tender.

7 Serve warm with vermicelli or white rice on the side and decorate with a few coriander leaves.



ZACHI HANEGBI, Businessman
Original from Jaffa / Resides in Jerusalem / @zachikouri

Zachi Hanegbi is the founder, chairman, and CEO of the National Beverage Company—Coca-Cola Bottling in Palestine. He is a native Middle Eastern businessman and has a number of executive positions and board memberships, including with Paltel (the leading telecommunication company in Palestine) and Trans-Investment Company, a real estate development in Florida. He is also the chairman of the NGO Development Center in Jerusalem and chairman of the Board of Trustees at Dar Al Kalima College in Bethlehem and recipient of the Business for Peace Award 2015, Oslo, Norway.

Battiri Sheikh El Mahshi Stuffed Eggplant

After leaving Jaffa in 1948 and taking refuge in Beirut, I was once left for a whole week without my parents. During this period, I had to endure the eating of mahshi on a daily basis and, after six days, I hated mahshi. After almost six decades away from Palestine, I got acquainted with a special eggplant dish made with the "Battiri eggplant" from the ancient village of Battir, a true delicacy. Over time, I learned how to perfect the Battiri Sheikh El Mahshi and turn it into a gourmet meal.

Serves 4

8 Battiri eggplants
½ kg (1 lb) minced meat (veal or lamb)
1 small onion
2 tbsp (30 ml) ghee
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
3 tsp (15 ml) allspice
2 tsp (10 ml) sumac
1½ cups (.3 liters) rice
¾ cup (.2 liters) broth
Salt, to taste
1 tbsp (15 ml) pine nuts
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1 Preheat oven to 325°F (160°C).

2 Cut the stems off the eggplants, slice lengthwise, and fry them. Put aside to cool before filling.

3 For the filling, heat a pan on medium heat, cook the meat with the onion. Add ghee, salt, and allspice. Keep cooking until meat is browned and water is absorbed, approximately 20 minutes.

4 Fill the eggplants with meat and place them in a pyrex plate. Sprinkle some meat on top of the meat, add meat broth, and cook for 10-15 minutes in preheated oven.

5 For the rice: Put 2 tbsp of ghee in a pot. When heated, pour in 2¼ cups broth. Add salt, to taste. When water starts boiling, add the rice first on high heat, then lower the heat while turning the rice. Keep on heat until water is fully absorbed.

6 In a separate saté pan over medium heat, fry the pine nuts until browned.

7 Serve in a deep plate, rice first then eggplants. Sprinkle with pine nuts.

ADLA LADHANEH, PhD, Director General
Origin: Beit Iksa / Residence: Ramallah / @alhadhaneh

AMIRA ABU EID, Hospitality Coordinator
Origin: Gaza City / Residence: Ramallah / @almuseum

Adla Laïd-Hadhaneh, PhD, is director general of The Palestinian Museum located in Birzeit. Museum staff consumes the varied harvests of the museum's garden all year long. Made by one of the museum's pomegranates, juice for cooked by hospitality coordinator Amira Abu Eid, who cooks light-but-spicy breakfasts based on the museum's grown plants.

Al Rummaniah Lentil and Eggplant Stew (V)

Al Rummaniah is a dish popularized by Palestinians exiled from Jaffa in 1948 and who sought refuge in Gaza. The main ingredients are sour pomegranate seeds, known as *sumac*, lentils, as well as cumin and salt, for seasoning. The high acidity of this dish is of symbolic significance for Christians during the Lent fast, serving as an allusion to Christ's pain. Their shared pain is represented by the sour taste, inspiring them to seek Christ's strength and perseverance. Al Rummaniah is now a popular dish, cooked and consumed all over Palestine.

Serves 4

½ lb (250 g) brown lentils
2 cups (2 liters) water
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
½ tsp (2.5 ml) pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) chili pepper or flakes
4 medium eggplants, cubed
4 garlic cloves, crushed
⅓ cup (80 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup (120 ml) pomegranate molasses
Juice of 1 lemon

1. In a large pot, boil the lentils, water, and spices on high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for another 15–20 minutes, until cooked.
2. Add the cubes of the eggplants and toss to combine. Cover them for another 20–25 minutes to simmer, until cooked and water has reduced.
3. In a separate pan, fry the garlic with a bit of olive oil until golden and fragrant.
4. Add the garlic to the stew, the chili and pour in the pomegranate molasses and lemon juice, and gently toss to combine the mixture, and simmer for about 5 minutes.
5. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5 minutes.
6. Portion the mixture in a bowl and decorate with some pomegranate seeds.
7. Serve hot, warm or at room temperature with bread or rice.

RAWAN BSHARA, Chef, Cookbook Author
JUMANA BSHARA, Restaurateur
Origin: Nazareth / Residence: Brooklyn / @tanoreen

Rawan Bshara is the co-owner of Tanoreen restaurant in Brooklyn, NY. She is a James Beard nominated chef, author of two cookbooks. Tanoreen was born out of a wish to honor and share her mother's recipes, and she now passes them on to her daughter and business partner, Jumana.

Stuffed Zucchini in Tomato Sauce

This recipe has a special place in my heart. As a busy school teacher, my mother didn't have the time to cook it regularly. When she did, it was always an occasion to look forward to. Plus, it's the perfect balance of vegetables, protein, and carbs in one dish.

Serves 6

6 lbs (2.7 kg) Arabic zucchini, stem ends trimmed and tops reserved
1 plum tomato, cut into 12 pieces
2 pounds fresh tomatoes, pureed
1 tsp (5 ml) sea salt
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) sugar

For the Meat Stuffing
½ cup (120 ml) vegetable or extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp (30 ml) allspice
1 tsp (5 ml) freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp (1 ml) cinnamon
¼ tsp (1 ml) nutmeg
2½ pounds (1.1 kg) coarsely chopped lamb from the leg, shoulder (or beef sirloin or filet)
1½ cups (.35 liters) short grain rice, rinsed
2 plum tomatoes or 1 beefsteak tomato, diced
6 tbsp (100 ml) butter or ghee
1 tbsp (15 ml) sea salt, to taste

1. Fill a large bowl with cold water. Using a long handled spoon or apple corer, remove the flesh of the squash and discard. Add the vegetables in the bowl of cold water and repeat with the remaining squash. Set aside.

2. Set the stuffing: Place the onion and parsley in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Add the allspice, pepper, cinnamon, and nutmeg and pulse for 5 seconds. Then sauté the meat until it begins to change color, about 4-5 minutes.

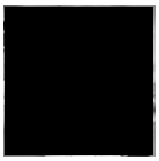
3. Remove from the heat and add the rice, tomato, ghee or butter, and salt, stirring to thoroughly coat.

4. Working with one at a time, fill a squash with the stuffing, leaving 1 inch of the top of the opening. Repeat with the rest of the squash. Then arrange them in a 5 quart, heavy-bottomed pot or casserole so that they stand vertically with the open side up. Place the opening with a pieced cored tomato. Add the pieced or pureed tomatoes to the pot, followed by 1 cup water and the salt and sugar.

5. Place the pot, uncovered, over a high heat and bring to boil. Cover and reduce the heat to medium, cook until the squash skins give when pierced with a fork, about 40 minutes.

6. Lay two or three stuffed zucchini's on a plate and cover with tomato sauce or slice them lengthways to reveal the stuffing (cutting the squash in half, then spoon the tomato sauce on top.

Note: For extra flavor, add 1 small chopped onion and 6 pieces peeled garlic cloves to the base of the pot, pre-cooking.



NOOD SAADDIN, TV Chef, Presenter
Originally from / Resides in Amman / @chef_nood

Nood Saadd is a well-recognized chef and TV presenter in Amman, Syria. He is a regular on cooking shows, always sharing his love and passion for cooking.

White Beans with Lamb Stew

This dish is my father's most desirable dish, made obviously during winter time to give you the energy to survive the rest of the day. The first time I tasted it, it was such a joy, the way the gelatin literally glued my lips together. This is best served with my ever-favorite vermicelli rice.

Serves 4

6 oz (275 g) white beans
2 tbsp (30 ml) ghee
1 large white onion, chopped
1 whole garlic, half chopped
1 whole garlic, half crushed
6 lamb feet (properly cleaned, see note)
2 tbsp (30 ml) tomato paste
4 bay leaves
½ tsp (2.5 ml) seven spices
½ tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper
4 large, sour tomatoes juiced
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Soak white beans overnight, then boil in hot water until it releases foam. Wash and drain, then set aside.

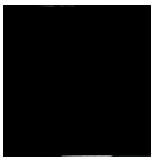
2. In a large pot over medium-high heat, heat ghee. Add the onions and chopped garlic and keep stirring for 2 minutes. Add the lamb feet and cook until golden on all sides, about 5–7 minutes.

3. Add the tomato paste and bay leaves, then season with seven spices and black pepper, stirring continuously. Add hot water to cover contents of pot and let boil for half of the lamb feet, about 2 hours. The meat will be tender and soft.

4. Add in the white beans, tomato juice, and salt to taste, stirring to combine. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer, covered, allowing the mixture to thicken properly for about 1 hour, until meat and beans are tender and cooked through.

5. Before serving, heat some ghee in a small pan, add the pounded garlic, and stir until it gets to a beautiful golden color. Then add the stew to intensify the flavor. Serve with rice.

Note: It is very important to monitor the level of water during the whole cooking process, if required, add boiling water. To clean lamb feet properly, have your butcher dehair them, and then at home, check that there is no hair left over the hoofs. If any hair is left, scrape off with a sharp knife. Combine ½ cup baking soda and ½ cup salt, add the hoofs and cover well. Leave to soak for 5 minutes, then thoroughly rinse in running cold water.



MOHAMED HADID Real Estate Developer, Artist
Origin: Nazareth, Safad / Residence: Los Angeles / @mohamedhadid

Mohamed Hadid is a successful real estate developer residing in Los Angeles.

Kibbeh Yogurt Stew – Kibbeh Bil Laban

This dish comes from the hands of my mother, Khairia Daher, a recipe passed to her through relatives, including her great-grandfather, Daher Al Omar, the Prince of Nazareth and the Ruler of Galilee, who used to rule Palestine in the 18th century, known for his hard-written mandate on co-existence and love for all neighbors, and religions, to live in peace and prosperity under his rule.

Serves 4

For the Kibbeh
¼ lb (200 g) bulgur wheat
¼ lb (200 g) ground veal meat
1 minced small onion
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) black pepper
Cold water as directed in bowl

For the Stuffing
1 minced small onion
¼ lb (100 g) finely chopped lamb meat
¼ lb (100 g) finely chopped veal meat
⅜ cup (2 oz) (50 g) pine nuts
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the Laban
4 cups yogurt
2 tsp (10 ml) cornstarch
Salt, to taste
1 large egg
2 cups (.5 liters) water
Pine nuts and dried mint (for garnish)

1. Soak the bulgur in warm water for 10 minutes. Strain and press with hands to remove all excess water.

2. Mix the ground meat, onion, spices, and bulgur in a food processor. Add a few drops of ice-cold water. Keep in fridge.

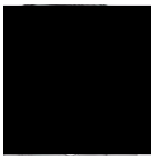
3. Prepare the stuffing: In a large pan over medium heat, brown the onions and the two meats, then season to taste. In a separate pan, brown the pine nuts in a bit of oil. Add the pine nuts to the mix. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

4. Pour cold water as directed in a bowl to moisten your hands. With moist hands, form 1 tbsp of outside kibbeh mix and oval shape, like a sausage shape. Hold firmly in the palm of hand, with the index of the other hand make a deep hole in it. Apply pressure with your finger in the kibbeh and turn it around so as to thin the layer of kibbeh mix as much as possible.

5. Stuff the kibbeh with a tablespoon of stuffing and close the open side to seal it well.

6. Prepare the laban: In a saucepan over medium heat, whisk into the yogurt the cornstarch and salt. Then crack the egg into a cup and in a whisking until smooth. Put on medium heat until mixture warms but does not boil, then add 2 cups of water until you reach desired consistency.

7. When the laban is simmering, add the kibbeh and bring to a boil and then reduce heat and leave to cook for 15 minutes on medium. Once it starts to boil, reduce heat to low and let it cook for another 15 minutes. Turn off the heat and transfer to bowls. Garnish with pine nuts and dried mint.



LAMAA BAZZARI, Impact Entrepreneur, Philanthropist
Originally from Nablus / Resident in Dubai / @lamaabazzari

Named to Forbes' Middle East's Most Powerful List for three consecutive years, Lamaa combines her entrepreneurial acumen with her passion for social philanthropy. She advocates for causes close to her heart, including mentoring budding entrepreneurs, and works to spur job creation and inspire entrepreneurship across the Middle East.

Stuffed Cabbage Rolls – Malfouf

Everyone has a comfort dish growing up and malfouf was one of mine. I love the taste and smells of the stuffed cabbage rolls cooked in a yummy lemon-infused stock. We add fresh dill to the minced meat stuffing which adds yet another kick to this hearty dish.

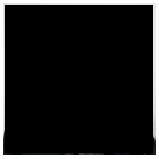
Serves 6

1 whole cabbage, about 3 lbs (1.5 kg)

For the Meat Stuffing
1 cup (250 ml) medium grain white rice
½ cup (120 ml) fresh dill, finely chopped
½ lb (250 g) lamb meat, minced
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cinnamon
1 tbs (15 ml) seven spice
Salt and pepper to taste
5 tbs extra-virgin olive oil

For the Broth
1 whole head garlic (peeled but left with skin)
1¾ cups (400 ml) water or chicken stock
Juice of 2 lemons
2 tbs (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1. Steam and pick the leaves from your cabbage so you can stuff and roll them. Remove the first layer of leaves and then cut out the core of the cabbage head (where the stalk is).
2. In a large saucepan full of boiling water, put the cabbage stalk-side down for 10 minutes. Drain and cool. Peel the leaves from the cabbage while removing the stalk (the white section) in the center. Be sure each piece is not bigger than your palm; if it is, cut in half. Set aside.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the rice, chopped dill, minced lamb, spices, and olive oil.
4. Place one cabbage leaf, the inner part towards you, on a flat surface and add 1 tsp of the filling at the base. Roll up, folding a little on each side to create a closed tube/cigar shape. Repeat with the rest of cabbage leaves.
5. Layer 10 peeled garlic cloves in the base of a large pan and sprinkle with 1 tsp of salt and 3 tbs of lemon juice. Arrange the stuffed cabbage leaves above, fitting snugly next to each other. Pour the water or chicken stock over the rolls until they are just about covered by 1 cm. Place a plate on top of the rolled leaves to keep them in place during boiling and then set aside.
6. When it starts boiling, pour in the lemon juice, 2 tbs of olive oil and cook on medium-low heat for about 45 minutes. At 30 minutes into the cooking, check that there is still water in the bottom of the pan and add additional water if needed. Turn off heat when cabbage leaves are tender and stuffing is cooked through. Serve immediately.



VICTOR MANUEL NASSAR, Painter, Musician, Entrepreneur
Origin: Bethlehem / Residence: Santiago / @victornassar

Victor Nassar is a painter, musician and avid entrepreneur residing in Chile.

Shishbarak Meat Dumplings

I discovered shishbarak through my grandmother and my mother and fell in love with it as a Chilean kid immediately. In Chile, we make it with beef roast strips. This interpretation of shishbarak is the result of the Palestinian diaspora in Chile, the integration of our cultures, idiosyncrasy, and the ingredients availability – a new classic and one of my all time favorite.

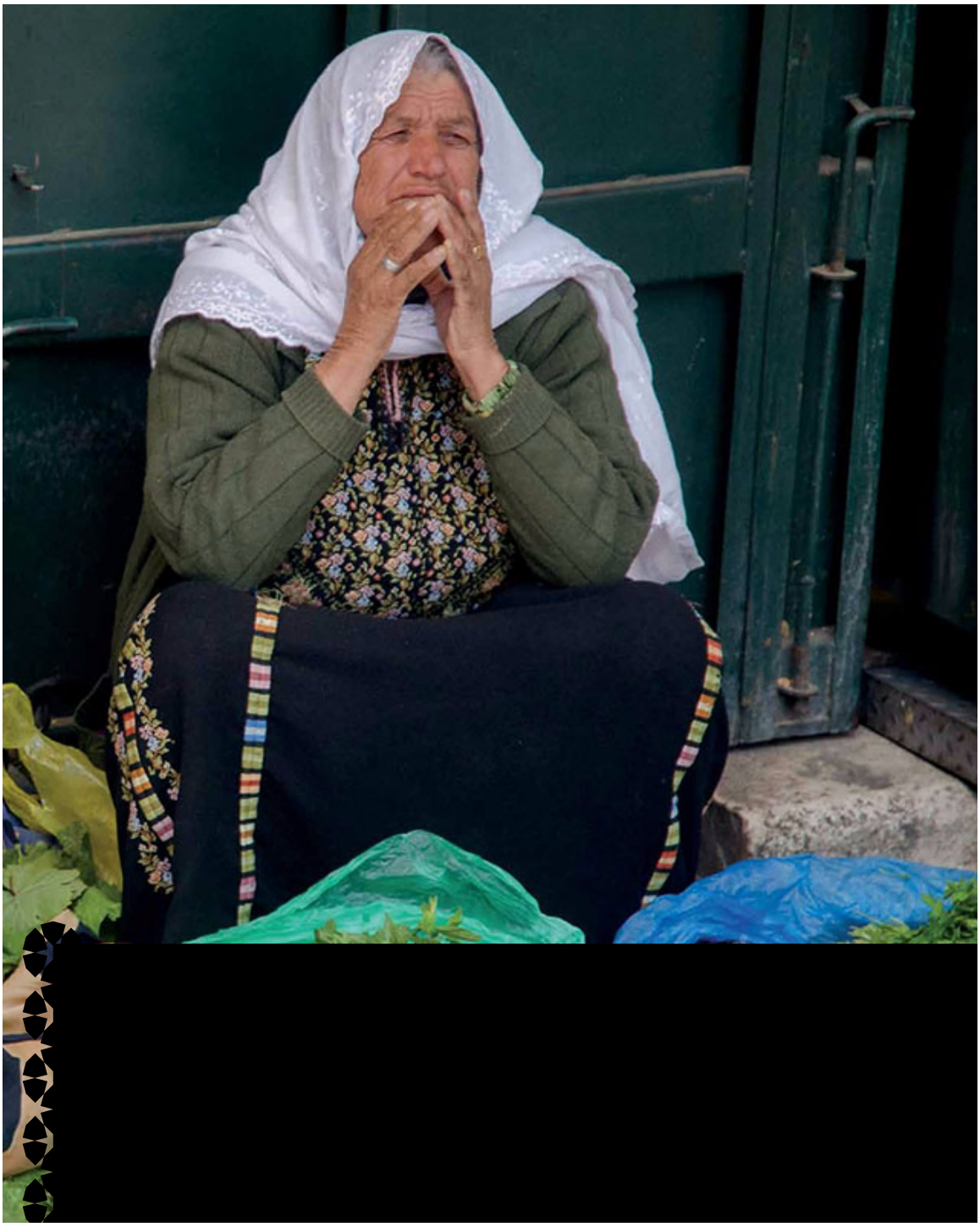
Serves 6

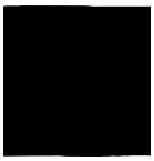
For the Broth
2 medium yellow onions
2 garlic cloves
6 tbsp (100 ml) olive oil
5 or 6 tbsp (80-100 ml) curry
4 beef roast strips
½ cup (120 ml) beef stock
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) oregano
2 tbsp (30 ml) salt
2 tsp (10 ml) pepper
4 cups (1 liter) plain yogurt
1 medium egg

For the Stuffing
1 lb (½ kg) ground beef, 7-10 percent fat
1 medium yellow onion
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the Shishbaraks
8 cups flour
2½ cups (6 liters) warm water
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
1 medium egg

1. Make the broth: Cut the onions in very fine julienne and the garlic cloves in fine slivers. Add the onions and garlic to a heated pan with olive oil. Cook until they are translucent and add half of the curry.
2. In a separate pan, sear the beef roast strips until they are browned.
3. Add 1 liter of boiled water, and mix with stock. Add cumin and a little oregano, salt and pepper. Cook over very high heat until the meat is well cooked. Remove from the stove top.
4. In a bowl, add yogurt and egg mixing very well. Gently add the mix of yogurt to the broth, stirring until combined. Keep on high heat until heated through.
5. Make the stuffing: Mix the raw ground beef with the chopped onions, and add cumin, salt, and pepper, to taste. Set aside.
6. Make the pasta: On a dense surface, spread the flour making a hole in the middle and gently add the warm water with salt. Combine the egg then mix to make a soft dough. Flatten the dough. With a little cup, cut 40-50 circles in the dough and set aside.
7. Fill in the circles with a teaspoon of stuffing, one half against the other. Press the edges to paste, then link together the extremes to make the finish shishbarak form.
8. Cook the shishbaraks in a pan of hot boiling water for 5-7 minutes.
9. Serve the shishbaraks with the broth in deep bowls.





YASMINE ALMASSRI, Actress, Dancer, Human Rights Advocate
Origin: Haifa / Resides in: Los Angeles / @yasmeenalmassri

Yasmine Almassri is an international actress, and human rights advocate. Her latest leading role is in the Short film Refuge (2019), which was shortlisted for an Academy Award in the Live Action Short Film category. In 2014, Yasmine made her debut on American television starring opposite Nick Jonas in the NBC drama series, Crossbones, opposite John Malkovich, and the ABC show Quantico, opposite Priyanka Chopra.

Stuffed Jerusalem Artichokes (V)

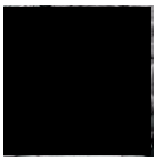
Everywhere I go, I make sure to locate a shop where I can buy za'atar and khobz; it's the first thing I ask friends to bring for me when they go back home. I add za'atar to many salads and even on this light and nourishing dish with the star of the show, Jerusalem artichokes.

Serves 4

4 whole Jerusalem artichokes or other artichokes
2 cups (5 liters) sesame bread crumbs (traditional or gluten-free)
4 garlic cloves, minced
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sea salt or pepper
1 tbsp (15 ml) fresh rosemary, minced
1 tbsp (15 ml) fresh za'atar or khobz leaves, minced
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
2 lemons
½ cup (120 ml) shredded pecorino cheese

1. Preheat oven to 320°F (150°C).
2. Cut stems off the bottom of each artichoke so that they are able to stand straight up on their own. Using kitchen scissors, cut off any thorny tips of the leaves. Place all four of the artichokes in a large pot filled with just enough water to cover a half-inch of the bottom of each artichoke. Bring to a boil, then cover with a lid and steam for 30 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine the bread crumbs, minced garlic, salt and pepper, and herbs.
4. When artichokes are done steaming, remove from the heat and allow to cool. Remove from the pot and place on a lined baking sheet. Then press down on the center of each so that they spread open like a flower.
5. Drizzle each with the olive oil (about ¼ tbsp for each), then squeeze the juice from half a lemon into each. Fill each one with ½ cup bread crumb mixture and top with shredded cheese. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes, until cheese is light golden brown, then serve.

Note: Can substitute Jerusalem artichokes with similar artichoke type or even hearts.



[redacted] is a General Manager, The Walled Old Town Bethlehem / Resident Bethlehem @ the Walled Old Town

[redacted] holds a degree in social science tourism. He worked as a general manager establishing Eat With Us and Travel Co, and managed many activities and exhibitions for local artists. Currently he is the general manager of Eat With Us and also the general manager of Banksy The Walled Old Town Bethlehem, a boutique hotel.

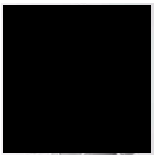
Cauliflower Fritters (V)

This is one of my favorite Palestinian recipes and my go-to cauliflower dish. Buy them fresh from the local Bethlehem market right before cooking.

Serves 4

2 lbs (1 kg) cauliflower
¼ tsp (1 ml) nutmeg powder
¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) Jamaican pepper
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric powder
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
½ lb (250 g) white flour
3.5 oz (100 g) yellow onion
⅓ cup (80 ml) vegetable oil
2¾ cups (.65 liters) water, room temperature

1. Divide the cauliflower into small, thin slice pieces. Then add the nutmeg, black pepper, Jamaican pepper, turmeric powder, cumin, and salt and mix well with the white flour.
2. In a medium pan, pour the olive oil. Cut the onion into thin slices and place in the pan. Let fry for 1 minute, until onion turns translucent, then add the spiced cauliflower.
3. Cover the pan and let cook until the cauliflower is softened. Stir every few minutes. Add very little bit of water, if there is a need. Remove from the stove to cool.
4. Add room temperature water to the flour and then add ¼ teaspoon salt and mix well. The dough should be of a sticky texture for 3 minutes, then add the cauliflower mixture prepared to the dough and combine well.
5. Deep fry in a large pan on medium. After heating the oil, take a small piece of the sticky dough - can use a tablespoon - and let it fall into the oil until it starts to turn brown, about 8 minutes. After it is done, repeat with more quantity to be served. Serve next to a yogurt dip or mixed salad.



SUZANNE HUSSEIN, Chef, Cookbook Author
Original Nablus / Residence Ottawa / @suzannehusseini

Suzanne Hussein is a chef and cookbook author residing in Canada. Having lived through and experienced the 1967 war first hand, listening to her grandparents in Bethlehem, her Nablus, as a child, instilled a love and pride for Palestine's memory, her family took refuge until it was safe to return to Canada. Her passion for cooking Palestinian food stems from her love for her mother's cooking growing up, which connected them to Palestine.

Moussaq'aa (V)

Moussaq'aa in Arabic means "cold". This is how it is best eaten. There are also tasty versions of this dish in Turkey and Greece. This is my take on this classic. It is made with a little olive oil and is totally vegetarian. It is so simple to prepare. Both the sauce and the eggplant can be prepared ahead of time and assembled in minutes.

Serves 12

3 large eggplants
¼ cup (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil and sunflower oil mixture
2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
1 onion, chopped fine
6 cloves of garlic, sliced thin
12 tomatoes, diced
1 tsp (5 ml) allspice
1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon
2 tbsp (30 ml) sugar
1 tbsp (15 ml) pomegranate molasses
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 can (about ¾ cup) chickpeas, rinsed and drained
½ cup (120 ml) pine nuts, toasted
½ cup (120 ml) chopped mint

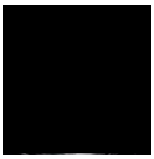
For the Sauce
5 tbsp (75 ml) yogurt
1 pinch of salt
3 tbsp (50 ml) tahini
2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 Preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C). Peel the eggplants and cut lengthways (about a half inch thick). You should get 4 slices from each eggplant. Brush both sides with olive oil and place on a baking sheet. Roast until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Remove to cool completely.

2 In a large skillet, heat 2 tbsp of olive oil. Add the garlic and onions and sauté until soft and translucent, about 2 minutes. Add in the chopped tomatoes, allspice, cinnamon, sugar, pomegranate syrup, salt, and pepper. Allow to come to a boil. Add the drained chickpeas to the tomato sauce. Lower the heat and leave to simmer and thicken slightly, about 5 minutes. Lastly, stir in half the amount of pine nuts and set aside.

3 Combine the sauce ingredients in a bowl and set aside.

4 To serve, put one roasted slice of eggplant on a platter, spoon the tomato chickpea sauce over the thicker side, and fold over to cover the filling. Repeat with the other slices. Layer some of the sauce on each rolled eggplant. Garnish with mint and the remaining toasted pine nuts. Serve with a salad.



MAYSAA SHAWA, Director, Producer
Original Nablus / Residence Beirut

Maysaa is a Palestinian filmmaker, writer, and producer. The founder of Nour Productions, her documentaries focus on the real-life struggles of women and children living in the occupied Palestinian territories and Lebanon. Her films have received over 60 international awards, including the Ludovico Vicenti Award in Italy (2003) and the Nipkow Trailblazer Award in Geneva (2011).

Aunt Izdihar's Stuffed Vine Leaves (V)

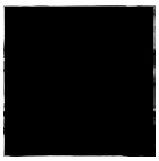
While growing up in Beirut, my favorite memories were of Sunday lunches at the home of my Aunt Izdihar, whose specialty was stuffed vine leaves with olive oil. Like most Nablus women, she was a strong woman and a wonderful cook with a great sense of humor. For her, cooking was a way of preserving a piece of Palestine in exile. Her secret was cooking with soul, or "nefs," in Arabic.

Serves 4

1 lb (454 g) vine leaves, fresh or preserved
2 potatoes, peeled and cut into thick slices
1 tomato, sliced
1 cup (250 liters) hot water
½ cup (60 ml) lemon juice
Pinch of salt and pepper

For the Stuffing
¾ cup (180 ml) short-grain rice, washed and soaked for 30 minutes
2 onions, finely chopped
2 tomatoes, finely chopped
1 cup (250 liters) fresh parsley, chopped
½ cup (120 ml) mint leaves, chopped, or 1 tbsp (15 ml) dry mint
¼ cup (60 ml) lemon juice
¼ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp (15 ml) pomegranate molasses
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) pepper

1. Drain rice. Mix with the stuffing ingredients in a bowl and set aside.
2. Place the vine leaves in a bowl of boiling water for 4 minutes. Remove from hot water and rinse with cold water. Strain well and set aside.
3. Place a vine leaf on a flat surface with the rough side facing upwards. Cut off the stem. Place 1 tsp of stuffing in the middle, forming a straight line. Fold the sides inwards and roll carefully so that it does not break apart during cooking. Continue rolling the other leaves.
4. Place the potato and tomato slices in the bottom of a pot. Add the rolled vine leaves, stacking them tightly together.
5. Pour on ¼ cup of lemon juice and 1 cup of water until leaves are covered with liquid. Sprinkle a pinch of salt and pepper. Cover with a heavy plate to keep the vine leaves in place. Simmer on a low flame for 1½ hour or so to taste.
6. Once cooked through, but not overcooked (make sure rice does not become soggy), take the plate off and allow the leaves to cool in the pot. Then, lift the potato and tomato slices out of the pot and set aside. Strain the liquid into a separate bowl. Put a serving plate on top of the pot and flip over. Lift the pot slowly so that the rolls are neatly stacked on the plate with the potatoes and tomatoes on top. Add a bit of the liquid to taste.
7. Eat at room temperature or cold and garnish with pomegranate seeds if you wish (optional).



TAREK DAKA, Chef, Restaurateur
Original Palestinian Cuisine / Residence: New York City / @qanoun.nyc

Tarek Daka is a chef and owner of Pasha and Qanoun restaurants in Manhattan, offering modern takes on Palestinian cuisine. Having grown up on a farm with his family where he ate all different types of vegetables, he left New York to learn the basics of flavor profiles, before returning to introduce Palestinian cuisine to a wider audience.

Lentil Croquette (V)

While our food is very delicious and unique, it is always meant to be shared and eaten with the family, which makes presentation and individual plating for customers a major challenge at Qanoun, and Mujadara croquettes manifest this challenge.

Serves 10

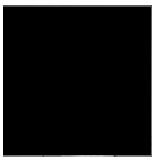
¼ lb (250 g) green lentils
4 cups (1 liter) water
¼ lb (100 g) Spanish onion, diced
0.7 oz (20 g) garlic, chopped
1 oz (30 g) oil
0.35 oz (10 g) salt
0.7 oz (20 g) parsley, chopped
7 oz (200 g) cooked basmati rice

For the Mujadara
1¾ lb (800 g) feta cheese
7 oz (200 g) parsley, chopped
4 oz (100 g) flour
¼ lb (250 g) butter
7 oz (200 g) milk, warm
1 tbsp (15 ml) salt, cinnamon

For the Feta Dough
1 medium egg, beaten
0.1 oz (3 g) flour
0.07 oz (19 g) panko
0.04 oz (19 g) ground salt
0.04 oz (19 g) paprika

2 small Makdous

1. Sort and rinse lentils.
2. Sauté the onion and garlic in the oil over medium heat until fragrant and translucent.
3. Add the water, lentils, and salt and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook until the lentils are tender (25 minutes). Set aside to cool.
4. Once cooled, add the cooked rice, parsley, and mix thoroughly. Set mixture aside.
5. Prepare the béchamel. In a medium sauce pan, melt the butter over low heat. Whisk in the flour until thoroughly combined.
6. Cook until very light brown then add the warm milk, slowly until fully incorporated. Add the cinnamon, allspice and salt.
7. Combine the Mujadara, béchamel, feta, and parsley and mix until thoroughly combined and add the lentils mixture and combine. Pour out into a sheet tray lined with parchment paper and set to cool.
8. Scoop the cooled mixture into 4-gram balls (around golf ball size). Roll until shaped into a tight ball. Set the balls aside in freezer to harden.
9. Combine the panko with the salt and paprika. Dip the balls first in the flour, then egg, then the panko mixture. Dip into the egg again, then the panko again.
10. Fry the balls and set aside. Cook makdous very thin. Place two table spoons of makdous on a plate. Put the croquettes on top and add yogurt and cucumber on top of the balls or serve on the side.



NOURA ERAKAT, Human Rights Lawyer, Professor, Author
Origin: Arab / Residence: Fairfax / @noureraka

Noura Erakat is a human rights attorney and assistant professor at Rutgers University. Her research interests include human rights law, refugee law, national security law, and the role of Justice for Some Law as Politics in the Question of Palestine. She most recently served as legal counsel for a Congressional Subcommittee in the House of Representatives, as a legal advocate for the Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Refugee and Residency Rights, and as legal advocate at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation.

Mujaddara Lentil and Bulgur Pilaf (V)

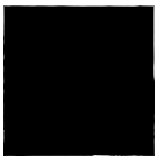
I grew up as the only daughter among three sons. To meet the household needs, my mama took over the kitchen and tasked me with the household ones so I never learned to cook well. But being a mama and a sister and a partner and a daughter living in a family setting, I had to learn some meals that could sustain us when no one else was around—and I was the last resort. My favorite go-to meal is mujaddara for the mix of heartiness, protein, and nutrition—and most of all, the ease with which it can be cooked.

Serves 6

1 cup (250 liters) black lentils
4 cups (1 liter) water
1 cup (250 liters) bulgur wheat
1 tsp (5 ml) salt, to taste
¼ cup (60 ml) virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely sliced

1. In a large pot over high heat, add the lentils and water and bring to a boil.
2. Rinse the bulgur wheat. Add the wet wheat to the pot of lentils and add the rest of the 4 cups of water to cover the bulgur and lentils. Add salt to taste and stir. Cover, lower to medium heat, and let cook for 30–40 minutes, until the bulgur and lentils have absorbed all the water and are adequately cooked.
3. Pour virgin olive oil into the pot and stir.
4. Pour 2 tbsp of olive oil into a frying pan and heat on medium heat. Slice onion in half lengthwise, place in frying pan, and slow cook on medium heat for about 15 minutes. Stir occasionally until the onion is deep golden brown and starts to crisp.
5. Once complete, pour onions with remaining oil over the bulgur and lentils and serve on a plate with a side of yogurt or mixed salad.

Bethlehem
Holy Land



SUSAN ABULHAWA, Novelist, Poet, Activist
Original: Jerusalem / Residence: Philadelphia / @susanabulhawa

Susan Abulhawa is a novelist, poet, and political activist. Her best-selling novels, Mornings in Jenin, which was translated into 28 languages, and the Blue Between Sky and Water, have earned her the distinction of being the most widely read contemporary Arab author. She is also the founder of Playgrounds for Palestine, a children's organization dedicated to upholding Palestinian children's right to play.

Vegan M'Sakhan (V)

My grandmother taught me to cook when I was quite young. Some of our inherited cuisine called for meat and poultry, which I've had to adapt to my vegan lifestyle. The recipe below comes from Sherna Ardeljabber's suggestions for "veganizing" m'sakhan, and it's truly delicious.

Serves 4

For the Kobiz Thoum
4 cups (1 litre) half white flour, half whole wheat flour
1¾ cups (.4 litres) tepid water
¼ tsp (1.7 ml) salt
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) dry quick-rising yeast
¼ tsp (1 ml) sugar

For the M'sakhan Topping
6 large onions, diced
½ cup (120 ml) vegetable stock
3-4 cups (.7-1 litre) meat alternative like seitan or jackfruit
¾ cup (80 ml) sumac or extra for topping
¼ cup (60 ml) fresh lemon juice
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) seven mix spice
Pine nuts, lightly toasted in a dash of oil
Olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Make kobiz thoum ingredients with a whisk to combine. Then add water and knead for at least ten minutes in a bowl. Grease another bowl lightly and, with greased hands, transfer the dough to the bowl. Knead for another few minutes until you form a neat ball by tucking in the dough. Cover and allow to rise until double in size.
3. For the m'sakhan topping, sauté the onions in ½ cup of olive oil until they become translucent. Add sumac, seven spice mix, vegetable stock, seitan/jackfruit, lemon juice and salt. Taste and add more lemon juice or salt to taste.
4. Now that the dough has risen, grease a baking pan lightly and divide dough into the balls by hand. Lightly tuck in the dough to create a ball. Once you are done cutting, allow the dough to rise for another half an hour.
5. After the dough has rested, lightly grease a round baking sheet with olive oil. Oil your hands and lift one dough ball carefully and place on baking sheet. Start stretching dough to form a circle. Stretch to about ¼ inch with thicker crust edges, then place in the oven. Bake your bread until it starts to brown, slightly under an oven rack to cook. Repeat with each piece of dough until one half of baking all of them.
6. Now that all the dough is baked, top them with your mixture, spreading evenly. Place your m'sakhan back on sheet that has been greased with olive oil again, and put back into the oven and bake until the edges are golden. Garnish with pine nuts, parsley and extra sumac.

ABDUL-KAREEM AL-SHWADY Professional MMA Fighter, Athlete
Original Salwad, Palestine / Residence Dallas / @alshwadymma

Abdul-Kareem's last name, Al-Shwady, represents his village in Palestine. He is a professional MMA fighter who was in the Desert Force featherweight champion in 2013 and 2014 and the Combat Federation world lightweight champion in 2018.

Freekeh Stuffed Vine Leaves (V)

This recipe was made and perfected by me and my wife together. While vine leaves are one of our favorite foods, it isn't supportive to weight loss because of its high carb content from white rice. As a professional fighter, I needed a healthier alternative—through that need came freekeh vine leaves. Now you can eat these healthy freekeh vine leaves while losing weight.

Serves 8

One standard jar of rinsed vine leaves
1 potato, peeled and sliced

For the Stuffing
2 cups (.5 liters) freekeh
1 cup (.25 liters) parsley, finely chopped
5 Roma tomatoes, finely diced
1 medium onion
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 tsp (10 ml) ground cinnamon
2 tsp (10 ml) curry powder
2 tsp (10 ml) ground cumin
2 tsp (10 ml) turmeric
1 tsp (5 ml) chili powder
2 tbsp (30 ml) seven spice
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice

For the Broth
Boiling water
1 medium onion
Juice of 2 lemons
4 tbsp (60 ml) tomato paste
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp (30 ml) pomegranate molasses

1. Wash the freekeh and soak for 30 minutes in water. Drain the freekeh from the water and set aside.
2. Mix all the stuffing ingredients together. Set aside.
3. In a large pot over high heat, soak the vine leaves in hot water for 10 minutes, then drain them. (Always stick to lighter colored vine leaves, as they have the most tender texture and are the easiest.)
4. Lay one grape leaf on a clean surface. Add about 1 tbsp of the freekeh stuffing to the leaf, then fold the two sides together and roll up the grape leaf. Before cooking, stack the vine leaves on top of the potatoes in a large pot.
5. In a separate bowl, mix all of the broth ingredients together. Pour the broth over the vine leaves in the pot, and place a small plate on top of the vine leaves to make sure that the liquid covers all the vine leaves.
6. Bring to a boil. Let it simmer on medium heat for 2 hours until the freekeh is fully cooked and the vine leaves are tender. Garnish with pomegranate seeds (optional). Serve with some yogurt and lemon.

PENELOPE SHIHAB, Entrepreneur
Original Home / Residence: Amman / @penelope_shihab

Advanced Jordanian-Palestinian scientist, entrepreneur, Penelope Shihab is one of the Most Powerful Arabs selected by the World Economic Forum, in collaboration with the Bahrain Economic Development Board, as one of the 100 Arab Start-ups shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution in 2019.

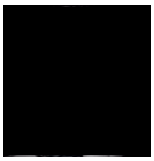
Maftoul with Pumpkin (V)

Growing up in Palestine, maftoul was a favorite served at family gatherings and feasts. As a working mother of four, I believe it is important to keep my kids connected to their culture and traditions, and including traditional food recipes in their diet is one way to do so.

Serves 4

- 4 tbsp (50 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium-large onions, chopped into small pieces
- 2 slices of pumpkin, deseeded into big cubic pieces (approximately 2-3 pound/1-1.5 kg)
- 1 small eggplant, chopped into very small pieces
- 1 zucchini, chopped into very small pieces
- 1 tomato, chopped into very small pieces
- 1 carrot, chopped into big pieces, 1 inch (2 cm) thick
- Turnip/radish (1 kohlrabi), chopped into small pieces (optional)
- 2 cups (.5 liters) maftoul
- 1 tsp (5 ml) seven-spices mix
- 1 tsp (5 ml) cloves
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) cumin and cinnamon
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
- 1-2 cups ready-made vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 can chickpeas (¼ lb, 250 g) rinsed and drained

1. Cook the maftoul in a steamer until toasted and fragrant, about 30 minutes. Pour some olive oil and water to it and add the olive. Set aside.
2. Pour half of the olive oil in a medium-size saucepan over medium heat; add the chopped onion and cook until softened but not browned.
3. Add the pumpkin first with occasional stirring for about 5 to 7 minutes, then add the rest of the vegetables. Pour rest of olive oil and combine on low heat.
4. Pour in the hot stock and combine with the pumpkin and vegetables and bring to a boil, then turn the heat down to simmer. Add the following to the stock: seven-spices mix, cumin, cinnamon, salt, black pepper, and cloves.
5. Add the chickpeas and combine for 5 minutes. Stir occasionally until vegetables are cooked through. Turn off the heat.
6. Combine the maftoul with the stock, pumpkin and vegetables blend and let it sit with the lid on for 10 minutes before serving.



DANA MALHAS, Fashion Entrepreneur
Origin: Nablus / Residence: Dubai / @dana_malhas

Saudi-Palestinian Dana Malhas is a well-recognized fashion and lifestyle entrepreneur currently residing with her family in Dubai.

Eggplant Fatteh (V)

This recipe is from the kitchen of my supermom, Hida Bazyan Malhas. It is her signature dish. As I was growing up, all my friends loved it and asked for it whenever they came over. It's one of those dishes that you will always find at our house at any of our dinner parties.

Serves 6

3 pieces Arabic bread, cut to squares and fried
3 tbsp (50 ml) vegetable oil

For the Eggplants
5 big eggplants, deep holes
1 tsp (5 ml) garlic
Sumac, to taste
Lemon juice, to taste

For the Yogurt Mix
6 cups (1½ liters) full-fat yogurt
1 tbsp (15 ml) tahini
1 lemon, squeezed
Salt, to taste

For the Garnish
1 bunch parsley, chopped
1 pomegranate, all its seeds (optional)
Roasted or fried pine nuts (optional)

1. In a medium sauté pan over medium heat, fry the cubed eggplant until golden. Add the fried eggplant with garlic, sumac, and lemon, and set aside.
2. In a separate medium pan, cut the Arabic bread into squares and fry in a pan or medium heat with vegetable oil until golden. Set aside.
3. Mix the yogurt with tahini, lemon, and salt.
4. Make the garnish. Chop the parsley and peel the pomegranate.
5. In a pyrex dish, layer the bread squares, the yogurt mixture, and the eggplants. To garnish, sprinkle pomegranate seeds, chopped parsley, and pine nuts on top. Serve immediately.

WAFA SHAMI, Food Blogger, Author
Originally from Palestine / Resident of San Jose / @palestiniandish

Wafa was inspired to write children's stories from her own childhood after her son was born. Her first story, Easter in Palestine, was published in 2019. Wafa has a passion for cooking and has a food blog in which she shares her family's recipes.

Cauliflower Tacos (V)

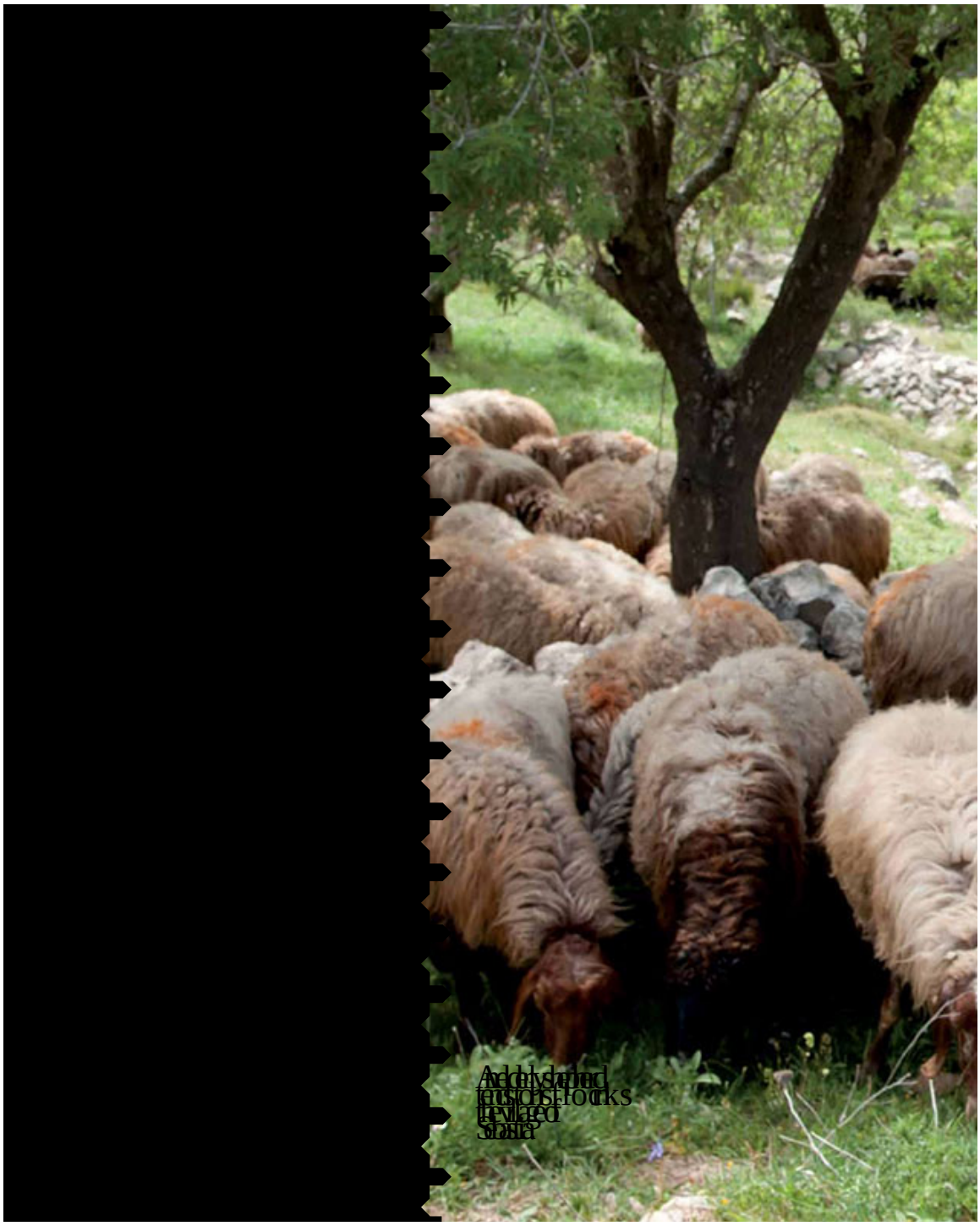
My late dad always enjoyed coming up with different appetizer dishes, which he loved to eat with his mezza while enjoying a glass of arak after a long day at work. Fried cauliflower was one of them. He used to cut them into small pieces and mix them with tahini sauce and extra lemon juice. This recipe was inspired by my dad; it is a modern take on a Mexican taco but with a Palestinian twist. For a lighter option, grill the cauliflower instead of frying – they taste just as good.

Serves 4

For the Dressing
3 tbsp (50 ml) water
4 tbsp (60 ml) tahini
Juice of ½ a lemon
Pinch of salt

For the Tacos
1 whole medium cauliflower cut into florets
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 pinch of salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin powder
1 cup shredded red cabbage (optional)
¼ red onion (optional)
Pickled cucumbers (optional)
Tahini dressing
10 taco shells

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Make the dressing. Add water to tahini and keep stirring until the mix turns into a liquid paste. It will look more like a dressing. Then add lemon and salt and adjust to taste.
3. Separate cauliflower into small florets after rinsing. Mix with olive oil, salt, and cumin and spread in a baking sheet.
4. Bake for 45 minutes to an hour until florets start turning golden brown.
5. Once cauliflower is done, fill each taco with small florets of grilled cauliflower and your choice of toppings such as onions, pickles, and shredded cabbage, and drizzle tahini dressing on the top. Optionally, add some Palestinian Sahtain sauce for a spicy kick.



MAISA ABDELHADI, Actress
Origin: Sakhnin, Israel / Residence: Haifa / @maisaabdelhadi

Maisa is an actress who has starred in several acclaimed roles in Palestinian movies, including Habibi, Degradé, 300 Nights, and The Reports on Sara and Saleem.

Chicken Fatteh

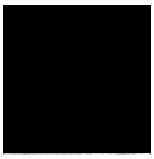
This recipe will always remind me of my summer days spent with my aunts, neighbors, and mom, conversing over delicious food, creating wonderful memories with lots of laughter.

Serves 4–6

1 chicken (whole, breast if preferred)*
Olive oil, for frying
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) black pepper
Dash nutmeg
1 cup (.25 liters) medium-grain white rice
2 cups (.5 liters) Arabic bread, cut in squares and toasted
4 garlic cloves, mashed
½ lemon
½ cup (120 ml) mint leaves
1½ cups (.35 liters) yogurt
¼ cup (60 ml) almonds and pine nuts
1 tbsp (15 ml) pomegranate seeds

*reserve stock from chicken once cooked

1. In a medium sauté pan, pan-fry chicken with a bit of olive oil together with the salt, the black pepper, and a bit of nutmeg.
2. After the chicken colors, add boiling water to the sauté pan and let it simmer for 30 minutes on medium heat. Reserve stock for later use.
3. Wash the rice very well. In a medium pot, cook the rice with a little dash of olive oil and salt and black pepper.
4. When it is mixed, add the chicken stock from the chicken. For every cup of rice, add 1 cup stock. Leave it on low heat until it is cooked.
5. Tear the bread into small pieces and fry it in olive oil, until browned. Set aside.
6. Mix the garlic with additional salt and lemon.
7. Layer your dish. Arrange the bread at the base, then add the mashed garlic salt/lemon mixture. Layer on the rice and then the yogurt. Add the rice mixture to the platter. Finally, add the cooked chicken and top with almonds, pine nuts, and pomegranate seeds.



HANNA BJ ASSAD, Film Director, Producer
Original Nazareth / Residence Nazareth

Acclaimed filmmaker and producer Hanna Bi Assad's 2006 film, Paradise Now, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. The film won a Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language film in 2006. His film Omar won the Jury Prize in the competition of Certain Regard at Cannes Film Festival, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, and won the Best Film at the Dubai Film Festival. His additional acclaimed films include The Courier, The Idiot, and The Mountain Between Us.

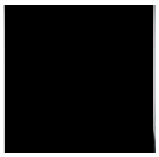
Chicken Makloubi

When I went to the Netherlands to study aerospace engineering in 1979, I was 18 years old. It was my first-time leaving home. Back then, the only way to communicate with family was through letters, and I quickly found myself disconnected from my hometown culture. The only way to get back to my roots and reconnect with my heritage was to cook my own Palestinian recipes and share them with my Dutch friends. This is a well-known Palestinian dish from the north. Here is a healthier method, with minimal amounts of frying.

Serves 4

1 organic chicken, cut into 4 pieces
1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil and as needed for drizzling
1 lemon
Salt and pepper
1 medium-size cauliflower, cut into florets
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves
2 cups (.5 liters) basmati rice (or any long-grain rice)
1 tbsp (15 ml) seven-spice mix (optional)
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground coriander (optional)
½ cup toasted almonds
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Place the chicken on a baking sheet. Rub on olive oil, lemon, salt, and pepper.
3. Bake the chicken for 45 minutes. Turn the chicken when the upper side becomes brown. This way you have two sides that are browned and cooked evenly.
4. Place the cauliflower on a separate baking sheet. Spray them with cooking oil and add salt, to taste. Bake in the oven next to the chicken for 25 minutes. Turn the cauliflower when the upper side becomes brown.
5. Boil a large pot of water and place the cooked chicken in it. Add the juices from the chicken's baking sheet. Add in the chopped onion and garlic cloves. Simmer 5 minutes.
6. Add the rice and the cooked cauliflower. Layer the chicken on top and let simmer until the rice absorbs all the water and is cooked. Drain excess water.
7. To serve, put a large serving plate on top of the pot and turn upside down (to give you a kind of rice pilaf). Garnish as desired.



NATHALIE HANDAL, Poet, Writer, Professor
Originally from Bethlehem / Resides in New York City / @nathaliehandal

Nathalie Handal is described as "a contemporary Orpheus." She is the author of seven poetry collections, including *Life in a Country Album* (2019) and *The Republic*, lauded as "one of the most inventive books by one of today's most diverse writers," and winner of the Virginia Faulkner Award for Excellence in Writing and the Arab American Book Award. She has edited two anthologies, and written, directed, and produced over 20 plays. In addition, she is a professor at Columbia University.

Chicken Maftoul

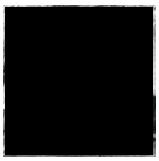
Everything my Sitti A fidoo did put a spell on us. Her Bethlehemite Maftoul recipe brought me the most warm and bliss. I always want the taste to linger on my tongue. When I make it today, it brings back memories of my childhood, city, and family, as if we aren't apart, scattered all over the globe. And for a brief moment we are home, and back in her spell.

Serves 4–5

8 pieces chicken thighs
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 tbsp (15 ml) allspice or seven spice mix
½ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric
1 garlic clove, minced
1 lemon
2–3 tsp (10–15 ml) olive oil
2 large onions, quartered
2 tbsp (30 ml) tomato paste
1 regular can chickpeas
2 tbsp (30 ml) butter
4 cups (1 liter) maftoul

For the Garnish
Coarsely chopped parsley

1. Season chicken with salt, pepper, allspice, turmeric, garlic, and lemon.
2. In a medium pan, sauté chicken with olive oil on medium heat for about 5–10 minutes, until it is slightly brown.
3. Place sautéed chicken in a pot of water (about 8 cups) with quartered onions and tomato paste. Cook, covered, on medium heat, about 30 minutes, then simmer, uncovered, until chicken is tender, about 25 minutes. Add chickpeas to chicken broth, cook for a few more minutes.
4. Melt 2 tbsp of butter in a pot. Add 4 cups of maftoul, 2 cups of water, 2 cups of chicken broth, and salt to your taste. Reduce heat to low. Cook, covered, until maftoul is tender, about 20 minutes. (If needed, add more broth while it's cooking.)
5. For each serving, add maftoul in a bowl. Pour broth over it with some chickpeas and shredded pieces of chicken. Garnish with chopped parsley.



THE JOJOBAN, Artists, Composers
Origin: Nazareth / Residence: Ramallah / @thejojoban

Three brothers from Palestine—Samir, Wissam, and Adham—descended from a family of four generations of renowned instrument makers, players, artists, and composers. They have been enchanting their audiences through online virtuosity since 2014, giving global and international listeners with unparalleled and innovative compositions.

Oven-Baked Palestinian Chicken

This dish is inspired by our grandmother, originally from the village of Sareen. This is one of the many dishes that brings back nostalgic memories of our childhood. She lived close by in Nazareth and, as soon as we smelled the aromas of this dish, we would run over and join her.

Serves 4–6

1 whole chicken, cut into 4 to 6 pieces
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) seven-spice mix
5 large potatoes, peeled and cut into cubes
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground coriander powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) pepper
½ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cinnamon
½ tsp (2.5 ml) Provençal mixed herbs
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sumac
1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil

For the Sauce
½ cup (120 ml) olive oil
5 crushed garlic cloves
2 lemons, squeezed
1 cup (250 liters) chicken broth

For the Garnish
Roughly chopped parsley

1. Preheat oven to 450°F (240°C).
2. In a large pot, boil the chicken and add to the water ½ tsp of salt and ½ tsp of seven-spice.
3. Remove chicken from boiling water once half cooked, about 20 minutes, and save 1 cup of the broth for the sauce (make sure to pass it through a sieve to remove any bits).
4. Place chicken pieces in a large bowl, then add potatoes and the spices (remaining salt, coriander, pepper, turmeric, cinnamon, Provençal herbs, sumac, and remaining seven-spice mix). Mix all together carefully with 1 tbsp olive oil. Once mixed, place ingredients in an oven-proof dish and set aside while you make the sauce.
5. In a medium bowl, add 1 cup of olive oil, crushed garlic, lemon, and chicken broth and mix well. Pour over the chicken and potatoes in the oven-proof dish. Cover dish with foil.
6. Bake in oven for 1 hour, until chicken is tender and cooked through. Once ready, remove foil and return to the oven 5 minutes more, until golden. Serve with a sprinkle of parsley.

JOY ALONY, Tech Entrepreneur
Originally from Ramallah / Resides in Dubai / @joyalony

Joy Alony is an e-commerce industry professional whose influence, business and entrepreneurship has spanned the globe. As co-founder of Fetchr, a Silicon Valley-backed technology company based in Dubai and at one time the "fastest-growing" problem-fighting, job-creating start-up in the emerging markets, was named one of the region's most interesting startups by Forbes magazine.

Chicken M'sakhan

I come from a long line of Palestinian women who define their lives through food. My grandmother was deeply obsessed with the idea that there was never enough food, and obsession she passed on to her daughter, who passed it on to me. To my grandmother and mom, too much food was a way of showing love. That connection between food and love deeply resonates with me, even today. M'sakhan was my favorite dish and the one I remember my grandmother teaching me how to cook. When I cook it today, I still do a head count: six people, 24 Cornish hens. Is that enough? It puts a smile on my face every time.

Serves 4

2 lbs (1 kg) onions, peeled and roughly chopped
2 cups (.5 liters) extra-virgin olive oil
4 tbsp (60 ml) sumac
¼ tsp (1 ml) cardamom
¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
1 chicken, cut into 4 pieces (preferably bone-in, but boneless breast also works)
¼ tsp (1 ml) cardamom
¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
Salt
2 loaves taboon bread

For the Garnish
Nuts for topping (pine nuts or almonds are the most commonly used ones)
1 tbsp (15 ml) sumac

1. In a large pot, add the onions and enough olive oil to submerge the onions completely (you may have a little with the size of your pot, but it took me 2 cups). Cook the onions over low heat, stirring occasionally until the onions are translucent, but still hold their shape and have some texture, about 2–3 hours. You don't want them to get mushy. Place in a colander to drain off the oil, but set the sautéed oil aside for later use.
2. Sprinkle the onions with sumac, cardamom, and black pepper across the until they are completely coated with sumac (note that the color and the taste will deepen when you layer the onions, sides coat the sumac gradually—you can always add more if you want).
3. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and place the rack on the bottom. Season the chicken on both sides with ¼ tsp cardamom, ¼ tsp black pepper, and a pinch of salt. Bake the chicken until done, and then place them under the broiler to get them crispy, another 15 minutes.
4. Place the bread in the oven, 2–3 minutes, to crisp. Brush the bread with some of the olive oil you strained from cooking the onions and top it with onions and chicken.
5. Bake for 10 minutes. Take out of the oven and top with nuts, sprinkle with the sumac, and serve with a side of yogurt.

HANEN SAMER MASALHA, Educator, Social Worker, Activist
Original Recipe Archive / Residence Haifa / @haneensamer

For the last few years, Hanen has lectured at the Academic College of Education in Haifa. Prior to that, she served for 10 years as the Jerusalem Foundation's director of program development, where she led programs in education, health and welfare.

Chicken and Veal in a Tin

My grandmother could neither read nor write, but she was the most powerful woman I have known. She taught me the meaning of love, helping others and how to create hope every day. She taught me how to love the kitchen, and that our food is part of who we are. One day, she told me, "I have nothing to give you as a legacy except what I learned from my grandmother's recipes, and this is the true heritage." My grandmother was killed in a car accident, on her way to visit a sick neighbor while carrying a hot cup of soup.

Serves 4

1 lb (½ kg) chicken breasts
4 laurel leaves
Extra-virgin olive oil
½ lb (200 g) veal meat
1 medium white onion
2 cups (.5 liters) nuts (walnuts, pistachios, or pine nuts)
½ cup (120 milliliters) seeded dates
3 cups (.75 liters) cooked rice
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the Rice
3 cups (.75 liters) long-grain rice
4 cups (1 liter) water

For the Dough
1 tsp (5 ml) sugar
2 cups (.5 liters) warm water
2¼ tsp (11 ml) baking powder
4 cups (1 liter) flour
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt
2 tsp (10 ml) vegetable oil

1. In a large pot over high heat, boil the chicken with laurel leaves and oil. Once cooked, around 45 minutes, cut the chicken into pieces.
2. In a separate, large pan over medium heat, fry the veal meat with the chopped onions in a bit of olive oil, 15 minutes.
3. In a small pan with a dash of oil, fry the nuts until browned.
4. Cook the rice according to package instructions.
5. In a large bowl, mix all the above ingredients together and add pepper and salt, to taste. Set aside.
6. Meanwhile, make the dough. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Mix together the sugar, ½ cup water, and baking powder.
7. In a separate pot, put the flour, salt, and vegetable oil. Mix them together. Add in the mixture of baking powder and water, and leave it for 45 minutes to rise.
8. On a floured surface, roll the dough thinly but not larger than the pyrex dish, which you'll use for layering the dish, add the seasoned and nuts. Then place the chicken, rice, and veal meat. Cover with the dough and seal by rubbing the dough with oil for browning.
9. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, approximately 40 minutes.

[redacted], PhD, Author, Anthropologist, Professor
Original Affiliation/Residence: New York City

Dr. [redacted] is the Joseph L. Buttenwieser Professor of Social Science at Columbia University and is the author of several award-winning books, including *Yale Strivers: Ivy League Style, Old Money, and Inherited Success in the Twenty-First Century* and *Dr. Mom Will See You Now: Sex, Kids, and Medical Authority in the Baby Boom Years*. She is a leading voice in the debates about culture, gender, class, and race in feminist politics.

Rice Stuffing for the Thanksgiving Turkey

I jotted this delicious rice stuffing recipe down on a pink Post-it when I took over making Thanksgiving dinner from my mother, Janet Auerbach. This recipe is passed down from my sitti (Rasha Auerbach) and adapted from Sitti's oldest daughter-in-law, Umm Yahya, a marvelous cook responsible for feeding the entire extended family.

Serves 8

For the Stuffing

8 medium onions, chopped
2 tbsp (30 ml) cooking oil
Fat scooped from the opening of turkey cavity
Liver, heart, and gizzards of the turkey (sometimes supplemented with chicken livers, since not all turkey livers are that big)
5 oz (150 g) ground lamb
3½ cups (875 ml) Uncle Ben's Converted Rice
¼ cup (60 ml) (or more) slightly toasted pine nuts
2 tbsp (30 ml) salt
3 tsp (15 ml) Arabic spice combination (5 tbsp black pepper, 2 tbsp cinnamon, 2 tbsp allspice, 2 tbsp nutmeg, 2 tbsp cloves, 1 tbsp ground cardamom)
½ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric and/or some threads of saffron

1. In a large, heavy pot over medium heat, fry the onions in the oil and turkey fat until glazed.
2. Add the chopped liver, heart, and gizzards and continue to fry gently.
3. Add the ground lamb to fry gently, stirring occasionally. Once this is lightly browned, add the rice and fry gently in the fat until it is well-coated. Add the pine nuts, salt, Arabic spice, and the saffron/turmeric for a minute or two.
4. Finally, in the same pot, add enough water to cover the rice by about ½ inch. Cover and cook over low flame until water is absorbed, about 15 minutes. It should be a bit firmer than al dente. Then you are ready to stuff the turkey with the stuffing.
5. Once you have cooked the turkey in your preferred way, let it sit for 20–30 minutes, cut open the sewing of the legs, and scoop out the stuffing into a warmed bowl.
6. My dad likes to eat it with plain yogurt. Additional sides can include gravy, roasted or steamed vegetables.

LUBNA WARDEH, Creative Chef, Foodie
Originally from Karem, Jerusalem / Resides in Amman / @eat_with_luba

Luba Wardeh is a self-proclaimed chef by passion and research. After 20 years in the UN serving Palestinian refugees, Luba decided to pursue her lifelong passion for cooking, creating new recipes and preserving old authentic regional recipes of the Middle East. She is well recognized for her research in ancient, forgotten recipes that she recreates into modern gourmet dishes.

Stuffed Baby Pumpkins

This earthy comfort dish was passed to me by my beloved mother, Laila Zaidan. Her family used to gather in autumn to enjoy the pumpkin season, picking them fresh from my grandfather's garden in Karem, to transform them into a dish that is so rich in flavor and love to warm those chilling nights in Jerusalem.

Serves 4

4 small baby pumpkins
1 tbsp of salt
3 tbsp (50 ml) sunflower oil
1 tbsp of ground black pepper
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ginger, grated
½ lb (250 g) ground beef
1 tsp (5 ml) curry powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cardamom powder
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cinnamon
A dash of chili powder
A dash of nutmeg
2 cups (.5 liters) basmati rice, rinsed
3 cups (.75 liters) beef stock
3 tbsp each (crushed) almonds, pistachios, raisins, and dried cranberries
1 tsp (5 ml) pumpkin seeds
Handful fresh chopped parsley
1 tbsp (15 ml) pomegranate seeds

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Cut the top of each pumpkin and scoop out the seeds. Keep the tops. Rub the outside and inside of the pumpkins with olive oil, season with salt and black pepper. Set on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for approximately 30 minutes or until the flesh inside is slightly soft.
3. In a medium-sized deep pan over medium heat, gently saute the onion, garlic, and ginger, then add the ground beef, spices, and salt, to taste. Cook for approximately 5-7 minutes.
4. Add the rice and the stock to the mixture and cook on high heat for a couple of minutes. Cover the pan and leave to simmer on low heat for around 15 minutes, or until the rice is almost cooked. Separately fry the nuts in a bit of oil. Add to the rice the raisins, fried nuts, and dried cranberries and combine.
5. Spoon the combined mixture, equally into the half-cooked pumpkins and add back the lids on top. Cover the tray with foil and bake for 20-30 minutes, until the pumpkins are tender.
6. Garnish with nuts, fresh parsley, toasted pumpkin seeds and pomegranate seeds. Serve with a side of yogurt.

ILIAS ATHERSALAMEH-AWATEF, Apprentice Chef
Original Name: Jericho / Residence Name: Jericho
@ilias.syrian
A student at Tabitha Knit College, Ilias studied to be a chef and currently works at Tawa restaurant in Bethlehem.

Turnip Tamarind

Turnips, or lift in Arabic, are one of the most fragrant vegetables I enjoy cooking. The smell of turnips frying reminds me of my mother's kitchen at the end of winter. Beautiful turnips grow on our land and my father collects them just as the winter comes to an end, around the last week of February. This dish is my interpretation of a classic Palestinian dish.

Serves 4

2 lbs (1 kg) turnips
1½ cups white long grain rice
½ lb (200 g) minced meat beef
4 oz (125 g) tamarind paste
1 tsp (5 ml) garlic, finely chopped
2 tbsp (30 ml) corn oil
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) black pepper
2 tsp (10 ml) seven spices
2 tsp (10 ml) allspice
3½ oz (100 g) sumac
1 tbsp (15 ml) pomegranate molasses

1 Peel and core the turnips, leaving a thick flat side. Soak the turnips in a bowl of water and salt for 10 minutes.

2 Rinse the rice and mix with the meat and spices and garlic (except the sumac).

3 Stuff the turnips with mix.

4 In a medium sauté pan on medium heat, fry the turnips until golden, about 5 minutes. Then fry the pulp until golden, about 4 minutes.

5 Separately, soak the tamarind paste in 4 cups warm water for 20 minutes. Strain the tamarind juice through a thin sieve.

6 In a separate pot, combine the tamarind juice and sumac. Bring to a boil for about 5-7 minutes until cooked and keep on medium heat.

7 Serve both with turnip pulp and sauce.

ELIAS AND YOSEF ANASTAS, Architects, Founders of Local Industries
Original Bethlehem / Residence Bethlehem
@elias.anastas, @yosef.anastas

Yosef and Elias have been steadily growing their family-run architecture and design studio, offering local solutions with recognized designs, including The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Bethlehem and Dar Jericho, Fusing regionally sourced materials to support local designers, their award-winning work is contemporary yet rooted in community and is a creative platform in support of Palestinian culture and heritage.

Shawerma Sandwiches

Shawerma is the quintessential Palestinian street food and is one of our favorite meals.

Serves 8

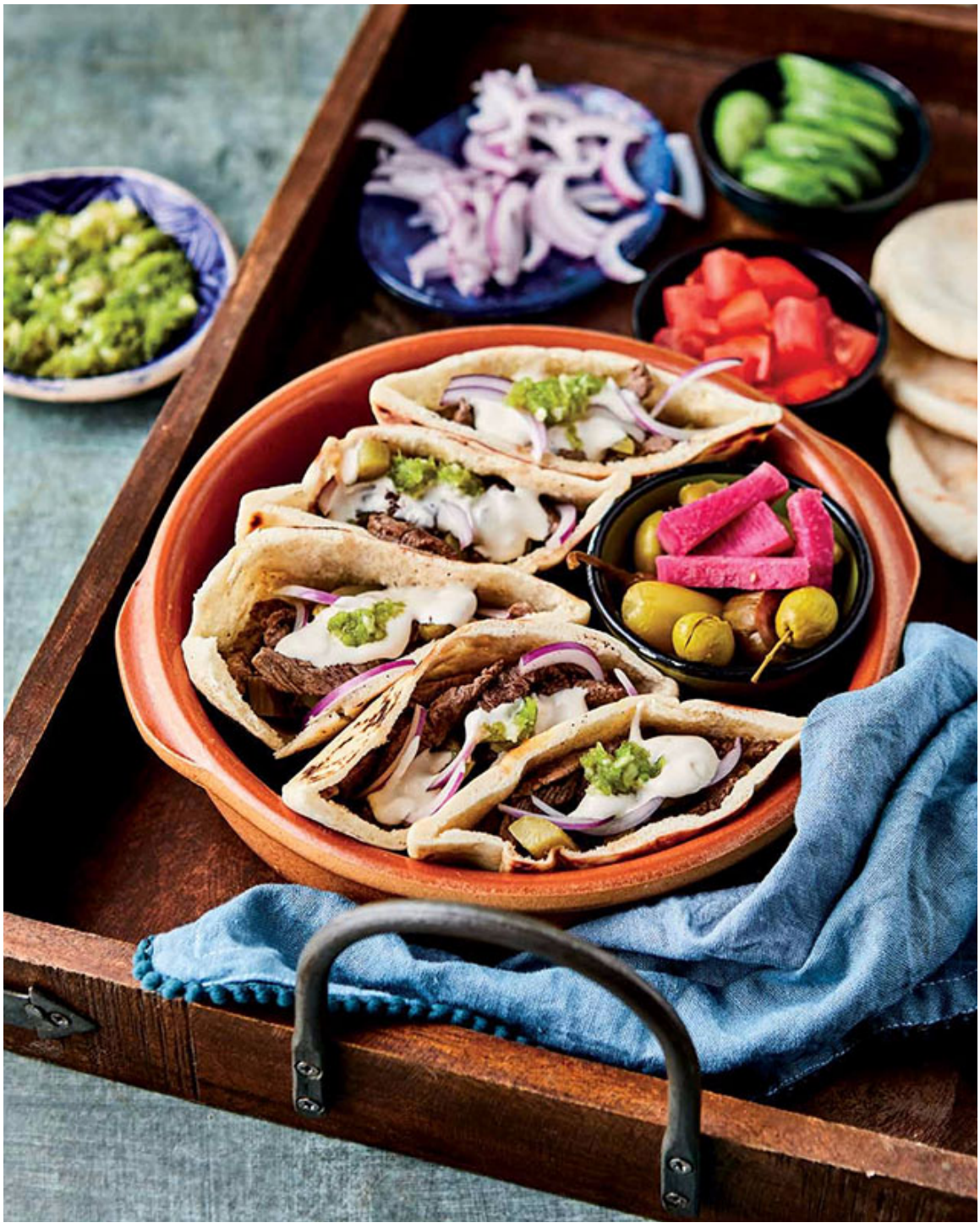
2 lbs (1 kg) chicken thighs, cut in fingers
7 oz (200 g) chicken fat, cut in fingers

For the Marinade
0.4 oz (12 g) cardamom, ground
0.4 oz (12 g) Arabic gum
0.3 oz (8 g) salt
0.4 oz (12 g) nutmeg
0.4 oz (12 g) white or black pepper
2 red onions
2 to 3 bay leaves
0.7 oz (20 g) garlic
Juice of 4 lemons
18 oz (500 g) olive oil
2 oz (60 g) wine vinegar
0.4 oz (12 g) cloves, ground

For the Tahini Sauce
2 tbsp (30 ml) tahini
Juice of 1 lemon
2 tbsp (30 ml) water

1. Chop the cardamom and let it soak in water for 6 hours. Drain.
2. Add to the cardamom the Arabic gum and salt, and grind the mix. Using a brush, apply the mix on the beef and fat.
3. Stir together the remaining marinade ingredients, and add to the beef and fat. Leave marinating in a glass container in the fridge for 24 hours. Remove the glass container from the fridge and let it rest for 2 hours at room temperature.
4. In a baking tray, superimpose two layers of meat and a layer of fat. Heat the oven on medium-high heat for 5 minutes, cover the tray, and cook on low heat for 2 hours. Turn off the oven and separate the fat from the meat pieces. Discard the fat.
5. Cut the meat pieces into 5 mm strips. Add a bit of sauce from the cooked marinade and cook on medium heat until hot, 5 minutes.
6. In a separate bowl, whip together the tahini sauce ingredients.
7. Serve the meat in the bread of your choice with onions, tahini, pickles, and chili sauce.

Note: Additional garnish options can include sliced onions, pickles, chili sauce, sprinkled sumac spice.



FADI KATTAN, Chef, Hotelier
Original Bethlehem / Residence Bethlehem / @fadi.f.kattan

Fadi Kattan has worked in Paris, London, and Palestine on tourism development, marketing sustainability strategy for large-scale company promotion, and international tourism relations. Fadi comes from one of the oldest Christian families in Bethlehem, growing up in the Holy Land just off Star Street, its most famous boulevard. Fadi's inspiration comes from his grandmother's kitchen. She founded the Arab Women's Union in Bethlehem.

Slow-Cooked Sumac Lamb

Palestinian lamb, the Awassi, is exceptional in its soft flavor. The sumac from the trees of the Hebron region brings in an acidity and piquant to underline the rich aromas of the land.

Serves 6

1 leg of lamb with bone (5.5 lbs to 6.5 lbs; 2.5 to 3 kgs)
2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
3 tbsp (50 ml) sumac plus 1 pinch
1 tbsp (15 ml) black pepper
2 tsp (10 ml) butter
1 tsp (5 ml) coarse sea salt

1 The night before, rub the leg of lamb with the mix of olive oil, sumac, and pepper. Wrap in grill and leave in the fridge overnight.

2 On the day of cooking take the leg of lamb out 1 hour before to raise to room temperature.

3 Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

4 On a very hot pan, sear the leg of lamb on all sides.

5 Place in a roasting dish and in the oven. Fifteen minutes after placing the leg of lamb in the oven, reduce the temperature to 200°F (90°C). Leave to cook slowly for 6 hours. Midway through cooking, turn the leg of lamb over.

6 Once cooked to your desired doneness, remove from the oven and cover for 10 minutes with aluminum foil. The meat will rest and release some juices.

7 Add to the juices 2 tsp of butter, a pinch of sumac, and 1 tsp of salt. Whisk into a sauce.

8 Carve the meat and serve with the sumac sauce.

REEM KASSIS, Author
Origin: Jerusalem / Residence: Philadelphia / @reemkassis

Reem Kassis is a Palestinian writer whose debut cookbook, The Palestinian Table, won multiple awards. Born and raised in Jerusalem, Reem uses the power of food and storytelling to share the Palestinian narrative with the world.

Freekeh, Beef and Vegetables Pies

Serves 4–8, makes 8 small pies

1 tbsp (15 ml) butter
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely diced
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
½ tsp (2.5 ml) seven-spice mix
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cumin
½ lb (200 g) minced beef (beef or lamb)
½ lb (200 g) freekeh
2 cups (½ liter) water
2–3 cups (100 g) cards (about 2 medium) cleaned and cubed
½ cup (120 ml) green peas
1 cup (2.5 liters) pine nuts, fried
1 lb (½ kg) ready-bought all-butter puff pastry sheets
1 medium egg, lightly beaten with a tbsp (15 ml) water

1. In a large pot on medium heat, heat the butter and oil. Add the onions, salt, spices, and cumin. Stir for 6–8 minutes on low heat until the onions have softened and started to brown.
2. Increase heat to high and add the minced beef. Cook for 10–12 minutes until the beef has nicely browned and all juices have evaporated.
3. Lower heat, add the freekeh and mix well with the meat and spices. Continue to cook, stirring periodically, for 6 minutes.
4. Pour in the water, stir, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover the pot, and simmer gently on low heat for about 3–4 minutes. Periodically give a good stir to make sure it is not sticking to the bottom, and add water as necessary. Cook until the freekeh is fully cooked but not too hard nor too soft. Add water if necessary.
5. Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). In a small pot of boiling salted water, add the cards and cook for 3–4 minutes. Add the peas and cook for another 3 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water to stop from cooking any further.
6. Transfer the freekeh to a large platter and allow to cool, about 10–15 minutes. Add the peas, cards, and pine nuts and mix until evenly combined.
7. Roll out your puff pastry sheets as thin as possible and cut out circles of approximately 15 cm diameter. Press one of the circles into a small bowl (about 8–10 cm in diameter), fill the bowl with 3–5 tablespoons of the freekeh mixture and bring the edges of the pastry together to close on the stuffing. Flip the bowl over and you will have a lovely circle shaped pie with the stuffing inside. Brush the egg mixture and place in the heated oven for 20 minutes or until the pastry is a light golden brown. Serve immediately with a side of yogurt.

LINA HADDAD, ESQ. International Attorney
Origin: Nazareth, Safad / Residence: Paris / @linahaddad

OMAR SHAKAY, Founder, Head Chef
Origin: Haifa / Residence: London / @omarcatering

Lina Haddad is an international attorney based in Paris and Omar Shakay is founder and head chef of OMAR Catering, based out of London.

Baked Kofta with Tomato

The day I tasted Omar's Kofta Bil Banadora, it was love at first bite. He taught me to love all Palestinian food again through my culinary senses—like my tata had when I was a child.

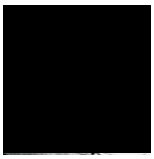
Serves 4

7/8 lb (400 g) potatoes, peeled and sliced into ¼ inch circles
7/8 lb (400 g) tomatoes, rinsed and sliced into ¼ inch circles

For the Kofta
1 red onion, finely chopped
½ cup chopped parsley, finely chopped
7/8 lb (400 g) minced beef
½ lb (200 g) minced lamb
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) allspice or seven spices
1 tsp (5 ml) garlic, grated
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper
¼ tsp (1 ml) grated nutmeg
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) crushed chili (optional)
½ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

For the Tomato Sauce
2 tbsp (30 ml) tomato paste
3 cups (.75 liters) water
1 tsp (5 ml) salt, black pepper
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) allspice
1 garlic clove, grated

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. In a large bowl, combine the onion and the parsley with the spices and meat and mix well with your hand.
3. Weigh out 2 oz of the meat mixture and flatten into a round or oval shaped mini patties. In a hot pan, add some vegetable oil and sear the patties on both sides. Set aside.
4. In a baking dish, arrange the patties in the bottom, topping it with sliced potato and tomato. Sprinkle with salt.
5. Mix all ingredients for the tomato sauce and pour it over the kofta. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 15 minutes, until the tomatoes have charred a bit. Serve with a side of vermicelli rice or plain rice.



MOHENA BAZAD, Chef
Original Home: Lod / Residence: New York City / @mohenabazad

Chef Mohena Bazad worked in some of the best five-star kitchens across the Middle East, where she continued to refine and master her culinary artistry and technique. She moved to New York to expand her career and decided to open a culinary atsshe could put fine Arabian cuisine on the international foodscene.

Baharat Lamb Ribs

Lamb is a loved meat in the Middle East; it is a significant part of our cuisine, but it was only in New York City that I first tried lamb ribs. This is an often-ignored part of the animal. I remember this recipe that my mother, Ziinat Mansour, learned from her mother, Fatima Mansour, exceptional women and the greatest chefs from Lod. This recipe was used to prepare lamb ouzi and I knew that it would be perfection for ribs.

Serves 4

¼ cup (60 ml) almonds, thinly sliced
2 shallots, thinly sliced and peeled
½ cup (120 ml) all-purpose flour
2 cups (.5 liters) canola oil (any oil can be substituted)
1 tbsp (15 ml) salt
1 lb (2 kg) lamb ribs
1 cup (.25 liters) plain yogurt
Mint or parsley, for garnish (optional)

For the Baharat Rub
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground black pepper corns
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground cumin seeds
2 tsp (10 ml) ground coriander seeds
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cloves
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground cardamom seeds
1½ tbsp (20 ml) paprika
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cinnamon
½ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg

1 Make the rub: Combine all spices together evenly.

2 Toast the sliced almonds on a dry pan until golden, then cool and set aside to use later.

3 Coat the sliced shallots with the flour and shake off any excess flour. Then fry them with 2 cups of oil until golden crispy. Pat them dry from excess oil and season with salt to taste.

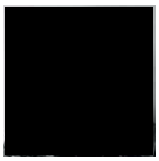
4 Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).

5 Rub the lamb lightly with oil and season with salt to taste. Then spread the Baharat Rub on both sides evenly and press the rub into the meat firmly to stick.

6 Place a wire rack on a baking sheet and pour about 1 cup of water into the bottom of the baking sheet to keep the ribs from drying out. Place the ribs on the rack in the pre-heated oven, then cover the pan tightly with Aluminum Foil, ensure all edges are sealed to keep steam in.

7 Check the ribs after 2.5 hours and if the meat is tender and easy to fall off the bone, pull out of the oven; if not, continue to cook until they do (this varies by the thickness of meat on the lamb). Be careful of the steam under the foil when checking.

8 When done, let the meat cool on the rack for 20 minutes to maximize the flavor then serve immediately with toasted almonds, crispy shallots, and mint or parsley to taste. Enjoy with a side of plain yogurt or rice.



SAMA ABDULHADI, Music Producer
Original Ramallah / Residence Ramallah / @sama_dj

Sama is one of the first DJs to emerge internationally from Palestine, her Boiler Room set has received over three million views. Sama's goal is to put Palestine on the musical map. She recently set up Jafra, an artistic community in Ramallah that also serves as a platform for DJs and producers to better their skills.

Pasta with Yogurt – Macaroni Bil Laban

I am not sure of the origin of this dish, but my grandmother used to make it for my father and his siblings. She then taught it to my mother when she got married to my father, and my mother believes she has made the tweaks that make it just perfect. It has always been a great dish no matter when served. And it is usually always served on any occasion.

Serves 4

7/8 lb (400 g) spaghetti
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1¼ to 2 cups (300–500 ml) Greek yogurt
Salt, to taste
1 medium onion, finely chopped
7/8 lb (400 g) minced beef
Pepper, to taste
Olive oil, for frying and boiling

For the Garnish
Chopped parsley
Pine nuts, toasted

1 In a medium saucepan, boil water with some olive oil and add the spaghetti. Boil for 10–15 minutes, until cooked.

2 Turn off the heat, drain the water, and rinse 3 seconds under cold water. Return the pasta to the pot, add salt, pepper, and 1 tsp olive oil to prevent sticking.

3 In a bowl, combine crushed garlic, yogurt, and salt. Mix well until yogurt is more homogeneous.

4 In a medium sauté pan over medium heat, cook the onions in some oil until golden. Then add the minced meat with less than ½ tsp salt and ½ tsp of black pepper, to taste. Stir constantly on medium heat until the mince is very fine.

5 In a deep pan, add the yogurt and the pasta, mix well. Add the minced meat on top. Then garnish with parsley and toasted pine nuts.

NAJWA NAJJAR Writer, Director, Filmmaker
Original from Jaffa / Resides in Jerusalem / @najwanajjarofficial

Writer/director with a BA in Art and Visual Communication and a background in documentary and fiction films. She has directed critically acclaimed feature films, documentaries and short films. Her debut feature film, *Personal Affairs*, premiered at the Berlinale in 2016 and was nominated for 2017 Oscars' Best Foreign Film, Golden Globe Awards, Her third feature film, *Eyes of a Thief* (Palestinian nomination for 2019 Oscars' Best Foreign Film), premiered at the Venice Film Festival and was released in 2019.

Kofta with Tahini Bake

Cooking for me is in some ways like making a film. Like the stories my mother passed on to me from her life in Yaffa, colored by memories and lost dreams, so were her recipes. I never got a precise recipe from my mother, Mary, so I learned to improvise while cooking.

Serves 4–6

For the Kofta
2 lbs (1 kg) ground beef
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 cup (25 liters) parsley, finely chopped
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) allspice
For the Tahini Sauce
2 tsp (30 ml) pomegranate molasses
½ cup (120 ml) bread crumbs
2 tsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

For the Tahini Sauce
1 cup (25 liters) tahini sauce
Juice of 2 lemons
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
2 cups (.5 liters) water (boiled)

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. In a large bowl, place ground beef, onion, parsley, and bread crumbs and mix well. Add olive oil, salt, spices, and pomegranate molasses and knead them into the meat mix.
3. Slice potatoes into thin rounds and boil in slightly salted water until they are half cooked.
4. Remove potatoes from water and place at the bottom of a non-stick glass pan. Then spread the meat mix over the potatoes to cover the entire base and make oval-shaped indentations that can also be placed over the potatoes. For the last step, make indentations in the meat with your fingertips, which helps the meat take up the flavor of the sauce.
5. Mix all ingredients for the sauce together.
6. Place the tahini in a pot and bring it to a boil before pouring it over the kofta.
7. Pour sauce into the glass pan, completely covering the meat mixture and potatoes. Cover the pan with foil, and poke a few holes in the foil to allow steam to escape.
8. Bake on the lower rack for 20 minutes, then remove the foil. Cook until the sauce thickens, for 15–20 minutes. Brown for the 1–2 minutes. Serve hot.

SAMIR JOUBRAN + TRIO JOUBRAN, Artist
Origin: Nazareth / Residence: Ramallah / @trio.joubran

Trio Joubran brothers, particularly Samir Joubran, were very close to Palestinian national poet, Mahmoud Darwish, and they were the only musicians invited to perform with him during his poetry recitals. Their long Mahmoud album was heavily influenced by Darwish's poetry and humanity

Samir Joubran's Seeqan Lamb Legs

This story dates back to 2007 in Paris where Mahmoud Darwish and I, major foodies, took turns inviting each other to increasingly elaborate "food feasts." In one such feast, I challenged myself to elevate the already elaborate Ka'b'een feast (lamb legs), choosing to present them in several variations, including mixed with a stuffed vine leaves dish, in a hearty soup, and, finally, in all its glory, garnished with parsley and a dash of cinnamon, as in the recipe I am sharing in this book. These lamb legs had been polished and prepared so beautifully, so I named this dish Seeqan (the Arabic word for legs) and Mahmoud said they were the most delicious he had ever eaten. This dish reminds me of the beautiful memories, shared with Mahmoud, who left behind a legacy and literary treasure that has touched us all to this date.

Serves 4

2 red onions, quartered
8 lamb feet (2 per person) (see *note)
1 tbsp (15 ml) flour
3 cloves garlic
3 laurel leaves
1 small tsp (1 ml) pepper grains
3 pieces cardamom
½ tsp (2.5 ml) salt
1 carrot, cut into three pieces
½ lb (200 g) freekeh

For the Mayaneh
4 cloves garlic
Juice of 1 lemon
2 tsp green chilis
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil

1 Put the quartered onions in a large pot.

2 Coat the lamb feet with lemon and flour, then wash thoroughly removing the lemon and flour. Put lamb feet, garlic, laurel leaves, pepper grains, cardamom, salt, and carrot into the pot. Cover with cold water.

3 Boil until the meat is cooked and tender, approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes. When the meat is cooked, drain the first water to remove the impurities and boil the again for another 1½ to 2 hours until the meat is fork tart. Cover with water and add spices.

4 Separate the stock into two. Salt the meat in one half of the stock. Return the other stock to boil to thicken and add ½ pound of freekeh to give the stock more consistency. Leave the freekeh for half an hour to cook.

5 Then heat up the lamb feet and stock in its own pot, and prepare mayaneh (garlic paste) on the side. Mash garlic, the juice of lemon, and 2 green chilies with 2 tbsp of olive oil. Serve in a bowl with the freekeh, 2 feet of lamb, and the mayaneh on the side.

Note: To clean lamb feet so they are hairless and cleaned, have your butcher clean them. If a bone tree is any hair left, scrape off with a sharp knife. Combine ½ cup baking soda and ½ cup salt and rub the trotters well, leave to soak for 5 minutes then rinse in running cold water.

RASHIDA TLAIB, US Congresswoman, MI-13
Original Detroit Bit U Alaqa, Bit Hanina / Residence Detroit
@rashidatlaib

Rashida Tlaib is the oldest of 14 children, and the proud daughter of Palestinian immigrant parents, and the mother of two young sons, who are at the root of her unwavering passion to help change lives for the better.

Stuffed Vine Leaves with Lamb Chops

This is my yiayia's (Fatima's) recipe. It's a tradition that brought all my aunts and Sitty Mo (that's me) around a table together, where we told stories and laughed as we sat and rolled leaves.

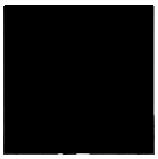
Serves 8

For the Vine Leaves:
½ cup (120 ml) lemon juice
2 tsp (10 ml) salt
2 lbs (1 kg) vine leaves (fresh or jar)

For the Stuffing
2 cups (.5 liters) medium-grain white rice
1 large onion, chopped
2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
2 lbs (1 kg) ground beef
1¾ cups (.4 liters) parsley, chopped
2 decent tomatoes
½ cup (120 ml) fresh mint, chopped
2¼ large lemons, juiced
2 tsp (10 ml) seven spice blend
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander

For the Pot
5 pieces lamb chops
2 medium tomatoes
14 (8.4 2 cups water (3¼ liters)
Additional salt and pepper, to taste

1. In a large pot, bring 8 cups of water to a boil and add the juice of ½ lemon and salt. Carefully unroll the leaves. Turn off the heat and place the leaves in the hot water for 3 minutes.
2. Remove the leaves and place them in a bowl. Cover with cold water. When they get cool, drain in a colander. Set aside any leaves that are torn to use later in the recipe.
3. To prepare the filling, soak the rice for 30 minutes in hot water and drain.
4. Sauté the onions in 1 tbsp of olive oil until translucent, not browned.
5. In a bowl, combine the onion, ground beef, rice, parsley, decent tomatoes, mint, juice of 1 lemon, seven spice blend, and coriander. Mix well by hand.
6. To fill and roll the leaves, gently separate one leaf and place it shiny side down on a work surface and place a teaspoon of the filling onto the leaf at the point where the stem joins the leaf. Fold the bottom of the leaf over the filling, fold each side inward in parallel folds, and roll up the leaf. The rolls should be firm but tight, as the filling will expand during cooking. Repeat until all the filling has been used.
7. Season the lamb chops with salt and pepper. Add the whole tomatoes on the bottom of a heavy-bottomed pot and then whole leaves. Layer the stuffed grape leaves until all are in the pot and place one used leaf on top and a layer of sliced tomatoes.
8. Place another plate upside down on top of the vine leaves to weigh it down. Add the 2 cups of water to the pot and cover. Bring the water to a gentle boil, add the remaining juice from the 1¼ lemons, reduce heat to low and simmer for 50-70 minutes, until rice is cooked through. Serve immediately.



ROBERT KETTUN, Sports Director, Professional Football Player
Original Bethlehem / Residence Santiago / @robertkettun

An athlete and former professional football player, Robert played for the Palestinian National Team, Club Deportivo Palestino (Chile), Skoda Xanthi (Greece), and Ethnikos Gazoros (Greece). He is a sports director for Club Deportivo Palestino, and for Fernandez Vial SAD.

Qidra

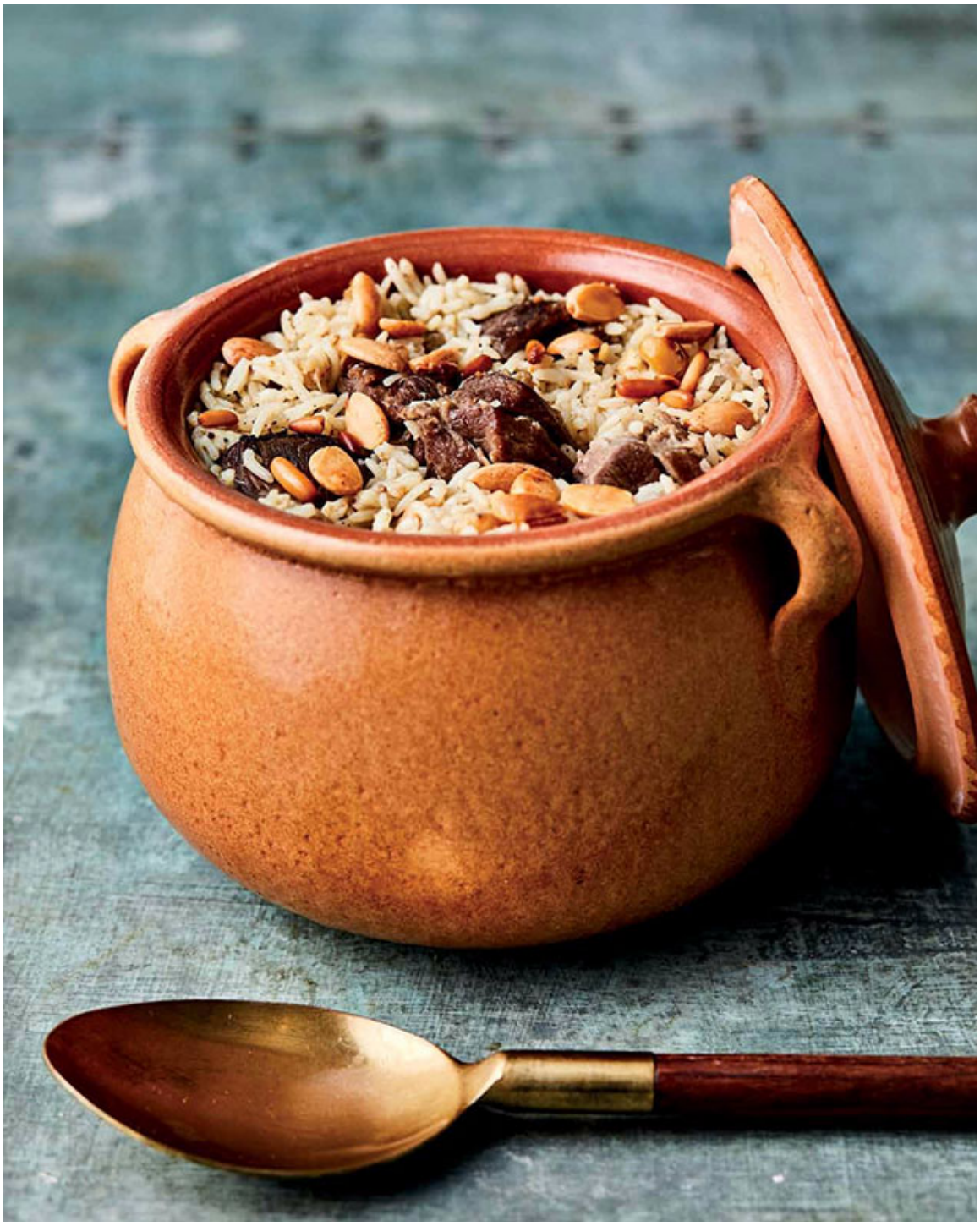
In March 2016 I was invited by board members of Atlal Kafr football club for a qidra feast. Two copper pots sat on the floor above a big plastic tablecloth, and the smell of wood wafted through the room. We ate it with our hands sitting down on the floor, with yellow rozz (Arabic for rice). Qidra is an Palestinian food is, in my opinion, one of the three best cuisines in the world, cooked with the best ingredients and from the heart that connects us to the land.

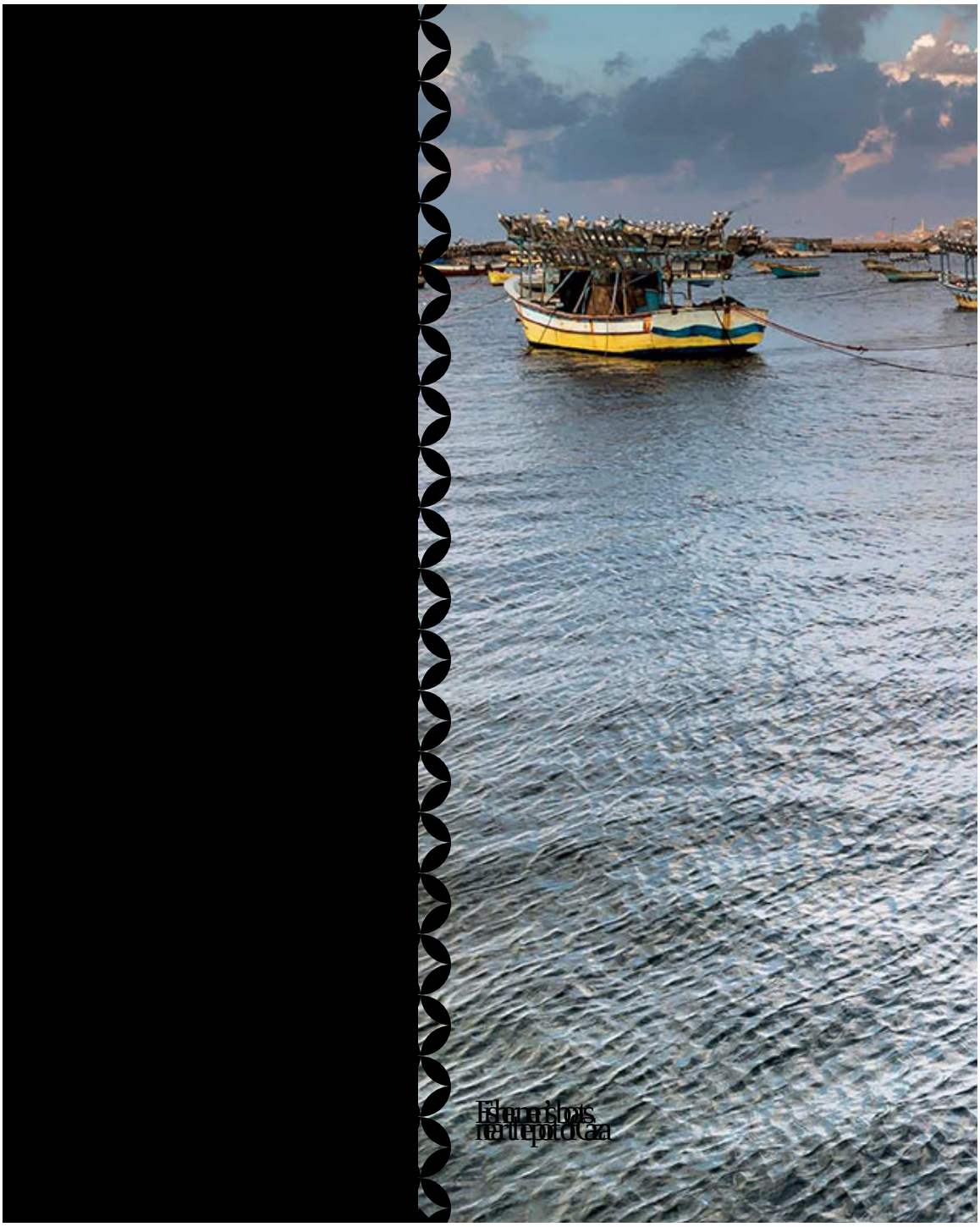
Serves 4–6

2 lbs (1 kg) lamb or beef stew meat, cut into 2-inch (5-cm) cubes
2½ tsp (12.5 ml) salt
2 tsp (10 ml) black pepper
2 tsp (10 ml) allspice
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground turmeric (optional)
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cardamom
3 tbsp (50 ml) olive oil, more if needed
1 onion, chopped fine
1 head garlic, cloves separated, not peeled
3 cups (.75 liters) long-grain rice
¾ pound (.4 kg) cooked chickpeas, drained
6–8 cardamom pods
4 cups (1 liter) chicken broth

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Rub the meat with the spices, and salt.
3. In a dutch oven pot of metal or pot, place the meat, onions, and garlic, and cover with the broth. Cover the pot and place in the preheated oven for an hour.
4. Uncover the pot. Add the rice, chickpeas, cardamom pods and ground turmeric (optional). Cover the dutch pot and put back in the oven for 45 minutes until the rice has cooked through.
5. Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 15 minutes covered.
6. Serve with a side of yogurt or Arabic salad.

Note: Add ground turmeric to the rice if you prefer a more aromatic flavor stemming from the curcumin, the compound in the spice that gives it a yellow color. Its texture is also a powerful anti-inflammatory





MOAYAD ALI, Chef, Restaurateur, Master Chef Judge
Original Tikkam / Residence Tikkam
@palestinian_chef_moayad_ali

Chef Moayad Ali is recognized as UK's premier chef. He has worked alongside several of the top Michelin chefs, including Gordon Ramsey, and is a regular contributor on Asian TV UK channels, Channel 4 and BBC Asian Network. He owned his first restaurant in London's Notting Hill, offering fresh Mediterranean cuisine with distinctive Palestinian influence.

Sautéed Prawns with Chili, Garlic, Coriander

My father, who worked in Nigeria in construction, loved prawns and seafood. He would often bring back prawns or other seafood and my mother used to make the prawns his favorite way for him, with lots of chili and garlic and tomatoes. It was created like a sharing plate and we all loved dipping our homemade bread into the sauce. This dish is inspired by my mother's prawn dish, as she makes it very similar.

Serves 4

12 prawns, peeled
3 tbsp (50 ml) olive oil
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tomato, diced
Salt and pepper, to taste
Juice of 1 lemon
½ bunch coriander, roughly chopped
1 red chili, sliced

1 In a hot pan over medium high heat, sauté the prawns with olive oil.
2 When browned, add chopped garlic and tomatoes, salt and pepper, and lemon juice. Mix in the pan until all mixed well. Garnish with coriander and red chili. Serve with grilled bread.

LAILAH HADDAD, Journalist, Author
Original Gaza City / Residence Clarksville / @gazangirl

Laila is co-author of The Gaza Kitchen: A Palestinian Culinary Journey and author of the memoir Gaza Girl: How I Survived and Thrived in Palestine. In 2014, she was featured in the CNN program Parts Unknown with the late Anthony Bourdain, his guide in Gaza City.

Gazan Shrimp Stew

This is one of the most sought-after seafood recipes from Gaza, taught to me by a talented woman, Um Ramadan, who is a refugee originally from Yafa, known for its seafood dishes.

Serves 6

2 lbs (1 kg) small fresh shrimps, peeled, deveined, and rinsed well
2–3 tsp ground cumin, to taste
2 tbsp (30 ml) fresh dill, finely chopped
6 cloves fresh garlic, finely chopped
3–4 tbsp (50–60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 large or 3–4 small onions, finely chopped
4 tbsp (60 ml) tomato paste
6 tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and finely diced, or 2 cups (1 liter) canned tomatoes, crushed
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
¾ tsp (4 ml) ground cardamom
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) allspice
¼ tsp (2.5 ml) black pepper
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) salt, divided
¾ cup (180 ml) sliced almonds or pine nuts
2 tbsp (30 ml) sesame seeds
2 tbsp (30 ml) Italian parsley, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 190°C.
2. Cook shrimps in a large skillet over a high flame with a pinch of salt and 1 tsp of the cumin, just until they turn pink. Pour off the liquid released by the shrimps and reserve the shrimps in a bowl.
3. Carefully chop the green chilis (you may choose to remove seeds if you prefer less heat). Transfer them to a mortar and pestle, and crush them well with ½ tsp salt.
4. Next, rub the chopped garlic and dill together between your fingers until fragrant. Set both aside.
5. In the same pan in which you cooked the shrimps, add the olive oil and warm it up until it is nearly sizzling. Sauté the onions, on medium heat until translucent. To this, add the tomato paste and stir for a minute until it has caramelized slightly.
6. Stir in the tomatoes, spices, crushed chilis, the dill and garlic mixture, and about a cup of water and simmer for 10 minutes on low heat. Stir in the shrimps, and turn off heat.
7. In a small frying pan, fry the nuts in about 1 tbsp of olive oil, taking care not to burn them. Reserve both the oil and the nuts.
8. Pour the shrimp stew from the pan into a cooking vessel. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, fried nuts, and the fried garlic and chopped parsley. Cover with foil, then bake in the heated oven for about 10 minutes. Remove the foil and switch the oven to broil. Leave the stew for a few minutes until the top is crusty. Serve with Kaj bread.

SUZANNE HUSSEIN, Chef, Cookbook Author
Original Nablus / Residence Ottawa / @suzannehusseini

Suzanne Hussein is a chef and cookbook author residing in Canada. Having lived through and experienced the 1967 war first hand, listening to her parents in Bir Zeit, near Nablus, as a child, is one of her vivid memories. Suzanne's memories of her family's determination to start a new life in Canada, her passion for cooking Palestinian foods stemming from her love for her mother's cooking growing up, which connected them to Palestine.

Citrus and Almond Prawns Wrapped in Knafeh Pastry

Use the versatile knafeh pastry for this savory snack. It also makes a perfect lunch with a salad and spicy dip on the side. The citrus nutty center is a lovely surprise inside the sweet pawn. These pawns are seriously crunchy. You could bake them but they taste better fried.

Serves 4

- 7/8 lb (400 g) knafeh dough
- 1 cup (250 ml) flaked toasted almonds
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Zest of 1 orange
- Zest of 1 lime
- 20 medium fresh pawns, cleaned and butterflied with tails intact
- 1 tsp (5 ml) ground sumac
- Salt and pepper
- Sunflower oil, for frying

1. Spread the knafeh dough on a working surface and cover with a damp cloth.
2. In a small bowl, mix the almonds with the lemon, orange, lime zests, and sumac.
3. Season the pawns with salt and pepper and open the backs. Take a pinch of the almond mixture and place in the opening of the pawn. Close together to encase the filling and continue until all the pawns are filled.
4. Take a few strands of the knafeh pastry dough, lay them down flat and spread lengthways. Place a filled pawn at the end closest to you and fold the dough around the pawn, using the filling to cover it. Leave the tail exposed. It will look like a comet. Proceed to wrap all the pawns in the same way. Keep covered until ready to fry.
5. Heat the oil in a saucepan to 350°F (180°C). Using tongs, gently lower the wrapped pawn into the hot oil, one at a time. Do not overcrowd the pawns. Turn the tongs in the oil until it is holding together. Fry about 5 at a time until golden and crisp. Remove and place on absorbent paper. Serve immediately.

RANIKA SHOU, Fashion Designer
Originally from Jerusalem / Resides in New York City / @ranikashou

A seasoned veteran of runway shows, Ranika Shou has shown his devotion and passion for good old-fashioned fine dining. His shows have attracted celebrities such as Heidi Klum, Jessica Alba, and Christina Aguilera among others.

Sayadiyeh

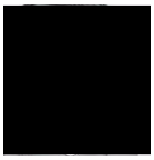
Serves 8–10

For the Stock
Half chicken (preferably thigh and wing)
1 large onion, chopped
Spices: 3 bay leaves, 1 cinnamon stick, 6 cloves, 5 cardamom pods, 1 tbsp (15 ml) garlic powder, 1 tbsp (15 ml) onion powder
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon pepper
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the Fish
Fish marinade (olive oil, juice of lemon, cumin, wide spice, salt and pepper)
3 lbs (1.5 kg) of fillet fish, preferably sea bass and cod
1 cup (2.5 liters) all-purpose white flour
Spices: 1 tsp (5 ml) cumin, 1 tsp (5 ml) allspice, salt and pepper
Vegetable or corn oil, for deep frying

For the Rice
5 large onions, chopped lengthways
2 cups (.5 liters) basmati rice
Spices: 1 tbsp (15 ml) cumin, 1 tbsp (15 ml) allspice, 1 tbsp (15 ml) turmeric, 3 bay leaves, 1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon, 1 tsp (5 ml) ground cardamom, salt and pepper
1 cube chicken stock

1. Prepare chicken stock by boiling chicken and onion in water and adding spices when boiling. Boil for 45 minutes until chicken is cooked. Strain stock, you can also use store-bought chicken broth as an alternative. In a separate pot, heat the oil and sauté the onions and spices for 30 minutes.
2. Marinate the fish in the mixture above for 30 minutes. Soak rice for 30 minutes in lukewarm water.
3. In a small pan, deep-fry onions until caramelized.
4. Cut fish in large chunks. In a separate bowl or plate, mix flour with spices and salt and pepper. Dip each piece of fish on all sides to evenly coat with the flour mixture.
5. Fry the flour-coated fish in the same oil used for the onions. Fry until fish turns a golden brown and cooked through, about 6 minutes. Drain the fish from the excess oil on a couple of kitchen rolls.
6. Next, cook rice in a bowl with spices for rice.
7. In a medium-size non-stick pot with lid, put a layer of rice on the bottom, then layer with caramelized onions, fish chunks, and more rice until you're done with all ingredients in the pot. Add the stock until it covers all ingredients by 1 cm.
8. Place the pot on high heat and bring to a boil. Then lower heat and close lid. Leave to simmer for 40 minutes.
9. Make sure rice is all cooked and take pot off the stove. If rice is not fully cooked, 10–15 minutes more. Remove from stove and leave to stand for half an hour.
10. Serve by flipping the contents of the pot onto a large tray. Garnish with caramelized onions, extra chunks of fish, lemon wedges, and fried nuts.



LAMBAZZAR, Impact Entrepreneur, Philanthropist
Originally from Nablus / Resident in Dubai / @lambazzari

Named to Forbes' Middle East's Most Powerful List for three consecutive years, Lamia combines her entrepreneurial acumen with her passion for social philanthropy. She advocates for causes close to her heart, including mentoring budding entrepreneurs, and works to spur job creation and impact entrepreneurship across the Middle East.

Filet of Fish with Jerusalem Artichokes

I always long to travel back home to Palestine to enjoy the fresh seasonal ingredients and incorporate them into day-to-day dishes cooked for my family. When one of my favorite Palestinian cities being Jerusalem, I have used Jerusalem artichokes and fresh za'atar leaves into this yummy and healthy fish recipe, transporting me back to Jerusalem, the soul and heart of Palestine, every time I eat it, while connecting my kids to their heritage and delicious food.

Serves 1

1 sea bass fillet (4½ oz, 130 g), no skin
3 marinated Jerusalem artichokes, cut in inches, wedges
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch black pepper
6 pitted black olives
6 sundried cherry tomatoes
1 new potato (roasted), cut in 4
Juice of ½ of a lemon
1 tbsp (15 ml) extra virgin olive oil
8 fresh za'atar leaves (can substitute 8 fresh oregano leaves, if preferred)

For the Garnish
Chopped za'atar leaves

Equipment
1 sheet parchment paper, 16 inches (40 cm) long
Kitchen rope

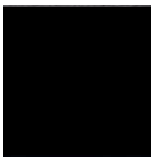
1 Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

2 Place the parchment paper on a flat surface. Place the sea bass fillet in the center of the paper. Add the artichokes, black olives, salt, black pepper, sundried tomatoes, new potatoes, lemon juice, and olive oil on top of the fish. Add the fresh za'atar leaves on top.

3 Close the bag by overlapping top and bottom paper, twist the two sides, and tighten the string to form a shape of a candy. Bake for 15 minutes, until fish is flaky cooked through.

4 Serve with side lemon wedges. Garnish with additional za'atar leaves (optional) and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil (optional).

Note: Can substitute with any white fillet fish such as seabream. Can substitute Jerusalem artichokes with another type.



SAMEH WADI, Chef, Restaurateur, Author, Spice Connoisseur
Original Era / Residence Minneapolis / @sameh.wadi

Sameh Wadi is a renowned chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, and spice connoisseur. He lives in Minneapolis with his dog and cookbook collection.

Roasted Whole Fish with Fragrant Herb Stuffing

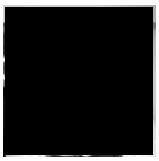
This recipe is a nod to my late father. He taught me how to cook fish.

Serves 8

2 cups (50 grams) cilantro, roughly chopped
2 cups (50 grams) flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
6 sundried tomatoes, finely chopped
1½ tbsp (20 ml) cumin seeds, toasted and ground
2 tsp (10 ml) Spanish sweet smoked paprika
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground Aleppo chili
3 tbsp (50 ml) fresh lemon juice
¼ cup (60 ml) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for cooking and garnish
2 whole fish (about 2 lbs each, 1 kg) whole fish such as branzini, snapper, or sea bass, gutted and cleaned
1 lemon, halved
Sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, combine cilantro, parsley, garlic, sundried tomatoes, ground cumin, paprika, Aleppo chili, and lemon juice. Season with salt to taste to make a paste, stirring the sides of the bowl as needed, and slowly drizzle in the olive oil.
3. Meanwhile, place the fish on a cutting board, and use kitchen shears to cut and discard the fins. With a very sharp knife, cut four 2-inch long, ½-inch deep slits into both sides of the fish. (If you are uncomfortable doing this yourself, ask your seafood provider to fillet the fish for you.)
4. Rub the fish all over with the olive oil. Season generously with salt and rub a small amount of the stuffing into the outside of the fish, making sure to get into the slits. Stuff the cavities with the herb stuffing and place the fish on the baking sheet. Roast for 30 minutes, until cooked through.
5. Transfer the fish to a platter. Squeeze the lemon over the fish and drizzle with a little more olive oil.
6. Serve with a few lemon wedges squeezed over fish, as desired.

Note: The fish will allow the herb stuffing to penetrate into the flesh of the fish.



SAMIR PALMOCANAVI, Chef, Owner
Original Ramallah / Residence San Francisco / @samirna

Born to a Palestinian father and Jordanian mother, Samir got his start in the culinary world at the age of 19. He worked his way up the line, working every position in the kitchen up to head chef. In 2019, he opened his dream concept named after his mother, Bait Rima, serving Arabic comfort food. Bait Rima has been awarded Top 10 Restaurant by the San Francisco Chronicle and Best New Restaurant by SF Weekly, along with rave reviews from critics. By 2020, there will be three Bait Rimas.

Whole Fried Branzino

Whole fried branzino was inspired by my mom, who used to fry whole fish during my childhood. This dish is so easy and comforting. The herb onion salad, shatta, and tahini take it to the next level.

Serves 2

One whole branzino (size as preferred), cleaned and scored

For the Marinade
2 cups (.5 liters) garlic, peeled
2 cups (.5 liters) extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup (.25 liters) water
1 tbsp (15 ml) turmeric
1 tbsp (15 ml) smoked paprika
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
1½ cups (200 grams) fine semolina

For the Salad
Bunch mint
Bunch parsley
Bunch cilantro
1 red onion, julienned
1 green onion, julienned
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt, to taste
Shatta
Tahini sauce

1. Make the marinade: Put everything in a blender and blend into a smooth paste. Rub this paste all over the fish to marinate.
2. Warm a cast iron pot, cook, dredge the whole fish with fine semolina, it will stick right to the marinade.
3. Fry fish at 370°F (188°C) for 5 minutes.
4. Plate fish standing upwards or sideways and top with a salad of picked mint, parsley, cilantro, thinly julienned red onion, and green onion. Dress salad with extra-virgin olive oil, fresh Meyer lemon juice, and salt. Serve fish with a side of shatta and tahini sauce.

Note: You can substitute branzino fish with striped bass or any similar type of fish. Shatta is a Middle Eastern hot sauce sold in Middle Eastern stores. It can be substituted for a hot chili sauce.

CHEF MOHAMED YAMOUT, Head Chef, Owner
Original Ramallah / Residence Oakland / @chefmohamedyamout

Mohamed took on the plate as head chef of Dyafa in Oakland at the age of 20, and Suk Sukkar in San Francisco. Since then, he continues to explore the latest in interpreting Palestinian traditional recipes into innovatively modern dishes while catering for a global audience.

Arak Battered Cod with Tahini

This was a staple dish in our household that my mom used to cook. This dish celebrates the unique relationship between tahini, tomato, and fried fish that I grew to love as a child. The arak in the batter serves as an element that will allow the batter to crisp up better and remain crispy. It is reminiscent of Japanese chicken karaage, where sake is used to make the extra crispy batter. Romesco is a Spanish sauce that is both flavorful and complex. Bread is often used as a thickener in this sauce, but in this recipe, we use cream tahini.

Serves 4

For the Batter
- 40g chickpea flour
- 120g cornstarch
- 2g baking powder
- 2g salt
- 6g baking soda
- 30g arak
- 300g water

2 cod fillets (or whatever white fish you prefer)

For the Tahini Romesco
- 1 tomato, roasted and charred
- 250g roasted bell pepper
- 100g sliced almonds
- 3 cloves garlic
- 100g tahini
- 8g apple cider vinegar
- 20g salt
- 8g Aleppo pepper (optional)

1. For the batter, just mix all ingredients in a bowl and keep in the fridge until ready to fry the fish.
2. Cut fish into desired strip size, season with salt and pepper, then dip into batter and carefully place into a deep fryer set at 350°F (180°C).
3. Fry until bubbles coming from batter slow down significantly, for five minutes at most. Fish batter is super delicate once fried. It is very light and crispy so be gentle when removing it from the oil and plating it for dinner.
4. For the sauce, quarter the tomato and bell pepper and place in a roasting pan with the almonds and garlic.
5. Roast in a 350°F (180°C) oven (or broiler) until everything is charred and most of the liquid from the tomato has been cooked off.
6. Remove from oven or broiler, and place immediately in a food processor.
7. Add the cider vinegar, salt, tahini, and Aleppo pepper and process until smooth and creamy.
8. Serve by placing the tahini romesco on the bottom of the plate and the fish on top. Enjoy!

MOAYAD ALI, Chef, Restaurateur, Master Chef Judge
Origin: Tulkarm / Residence: Tulkarm / @palestinian_chef_moayad_ali

Chef Moayad Ali is recognized as the UK's premier chef. He's worked alongside several top chefs, including Gordon Ramsay, and is a regular contributor on TV. His restaurant, La Maison, offers fine-dining Palestinian cuisine using the freshest of Palestinian ingredients and his mother's traditional techniques as his inspiration.

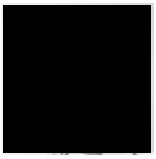
Char-Grilled Octopus

As a teenager, I used to ride my bike with friends from Tulkarm to Mukhalid (Netanya) beach. There were no checkpoints back then. It used to take us about 20–30 minutes and sometimes we'd use to bring back some fresh seafood, like fish, prawns, and octopus. My mother used to grill the octopus, adding some amazing homemade pesto. This is where I was inspired to create a similar fusion dish.

Serves 2–4

1 medium octopus, cleaned
3 tsp (50 ml) black olive oil
2 tbsp (30 ml) pomegranate molasses
1 tbsp (15 ml) cumin
2 cloves garlic
Salt and pepper, to taste
Spring vegetables (1 courgette, 1 green pepper, 1 carrot sliced long ways)
2 red peppers, roasted
Half bunch parsley, chopped
6 cups (1½ liters) water

1. Bring a pot full of water. Once water is boiling, dip in the octopus and leave in for 40 minutes.
2. Remove the octopus and coat with olive oil, pomegranate molasses, cumin, and garlic. Leave in refrigerator for 6 hours.
3. Make the roasted red pepper paste: In a blender, add black olive oil, parsley, salt, pepper, and the red peppers and blend until you have a paste.
4. Preheat the grill at medium-high heat.
5. Grill the octopus for 3–4 minutes per side.
6. Grill the thinly sliced vegetables until tender, and add salt and pepper.
7. Plate the vegetables, top with octopus, and add some paste on the side.



SUZANNE HUSSEIN, Chef, Cookbook Author
Original Nablus / Residence Ottawa / @suzannehusseini

Suzanne Hussein is a chef and cookbook author residing in Canada. Having lived through and experienced the 1967 war first hand, while visiting her grandparents in Beit Iksa, near Nablus, as a child, this memory remains with Suzanne's memoirs, her family took shelter until it was safe to depart to Canada. Her passion for cooking Palestinian foods stems from her love for her mother's cooking growing up, which connected them to Palestine.

Sea Bass Wrapped in Vine Leaves

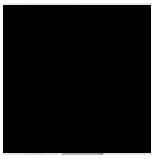
Grape vine leaves have a natural citrus taste and go very well with fish. By cooking fish this way, some of that citrus flavor dries and also keeps the fish moist. Serve this light lunch with the citrus potato salad. You won't miss the mayonnaise.

Serves 4

Juice of 2 lemons
Zest of 2 lemons
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tsp (5 ml) cumin
Salt and pepper, to taste
4 whole small sea bass (or any firm white fish), about .75 lbs (350 g) each
8 large grape vine leaves
Extra virgin olive oil

1. Mix the lemon juice and zest, garlic, cumin, salt, and pepper to make a marinade. Rub over the fish, cover, and set aside for 30 minutes in the fridge.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
3. Tie two grape vine leaves and place them side by side, overlapping (shiny side down). Place one fish in the center and wrap the leaves around to cover the belly of the fish, leaving the head and tail exposed. Brush all over with olive oil and bake in the oven until done, approximately 15 minutes. Alternately, you can cook on medium-high heat on a grill.

Figs grown
Farm



RAYAN SUFI-SHTAYYEH, Baker, Entrepreneur
Originally from Jerusalem, Palestine / Resident of Jerusalem / @rayashtayyeh

Rayan Sufi-Shtayyeh is the chief executive officer of Dar al-Beauty Lab, a boutique skincare manufacturing company in Jerusalem that focuses on producing premium skincare products, mainly Vitamin C. The company has a sustainability strategy and a social program, focusing on ethical production and creating job opportunities for women in Jerusalem.

Dates and Pistachio Ma'amoul Cookies

This recipe is special to me because ka'ek and ma'amoul are a family tradition for us during gatherings in every home during both the Muslim and Christian holy seasons in Palestine. It's special because you usually have several generations around the table sharing recipes, comparing methods, competing for best decorated cookies, and, more importantly, creating beautiful memories with your family.

Makes 30 ma'amoul cookies

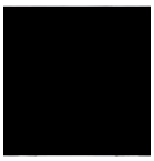
2 lbs (1 kg) semolina
¾ cup (175 ml) powdered sugar
½ tsp (2.5 ml) ground Arabic gum/mastic gum
½ tsp (1 ml) ground anise seeds
7/8 lb (400 g) unsalted butter
½ tsp (2.5 ml) yeast
1 tbsp (15 ml) rose water
1 cup (250 liters) warm water

Filling Choices

Date filling
½ cup (120 ml) pitted soft dates (or date paste)
1 tbsp (15 ml) unsalted butter
½ tsp (1 ml) cinnamon
½ tsp (1 ml) ground anise seeds

Pistachio filling
1 cup (250 liters) peeled crushed pistachios
1 tbsp (15 ml) butter

1. To make the dough, put the semolina, sugar, Arabic gum and anise seeds into a large bowl and mix. Then add the melted butter and mix until you get a dough. Cover the bowl and leave the dough to rest overnight at room temperature.
2. Next day, preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
3. Dissolve the yeast in warm water, add the rose water, and pour mixture into the dough.
4. Divide the dough into small balls.
5. Make the ingredients for the filling. Flatten the dough, add teaspoon of your choice of filling. Fold the dough over the filling and shape it to make it shape you would like. Spiral style can include making the date filling into a rope shape, flatten the dough into a round disk shape, or wrap the dough around date and leave a hole in the middle to shape it like a mini-doughnut.
6. Decorate by using ma'amoul molds by placing the filled dough into the mold and use tongs (chopsticks work) by pinching shapes using the tongs on the top and sides of the cookies.
7. Place the ma'amoul on a tray. Let it sit for 30 minutes before baking. Place the tray in the oven for around 20–30 minutes, until they get a light golden color. Let them cool completely.
8. Dust with icing sugar before serving.



FATEN HALHALA, Sous-Chef
Originally from Bethlehem / Resides in Bethlehem / @faten_halhala

Before joining the culinary world, Faten taught at a theater in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. In 2017, she joined the Hosh Al Syrian family in Bethlehem, and has since become the sous-chef of Fadi Kattan at Fawda restaurant in Bethlehem.

Roasted Spice Apples

Since working with Chef Fadi Kattan, I enjoy using different techniques to put forward our Palestinian produce. In this recipe I combine many fragrant tastes of Palestine with an essential Palestinian staple, Tahini. The combination of rose water, anise, cardamom and tahini completes the winter taste of apples.

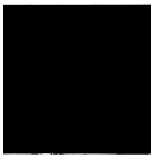
Serves 4

3 tbsp (50 ml) honey
Water
4 apples
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
1 tsp (5 ml) rose water

For the Tahini Sauce
4 tbsp (60 ml) tahini
1 tbsp (15 ml) cooked syrup

Fresh mint leaves
Dried rose petals

1. Preheat oven to 320°F (150°C).
2. In a large pot, dilute the honey in enough water to cover the apples.
3. Place the 4 apples, cinnamon, anise, and rose water and bring to a boil.
4. Boil the apples for 4 minutes in the boiling syrup.
5. Remove the apples and place in a roasted pan lined with baking paper and place in the oven to roast, approximately 15 minutes.
6. Leave the syrup in the pot on a low heat to thicken. Once the syrup is thick, mix the tahini and the spoon of syrup together for the sauce.
7. Plate 1 spoon of the sauce with the apples on top. Decorate with fresh mint leaves and dried rose petals.



LINA HADID, ESQ. International Attorney, Activist
Origin: Nazareth, Israel / Residence: Paris / @linahadid

Lina Hadid is a highly successful and well-recognized international attorney, negotiator, and advocate for Palestinian human rights. She lives in Paris with her husband and two sons and travels the globe for work and as an influential voice on behalf of Palestinian rights.

Teta Khairia's Rice Pudding

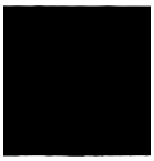
My rice pudding recipe was originally inspired by my grandmother (teta), Khairia Daher Hadid. My mother, Gada Hadid, a baker who worked a lot, and my teta always wanted to make sure I had Palestinian rice pudding in the fridge for breakfast during school, as she certainly didn't want me to eat commercial refined sugar cereals that were common in the U.S. Thereafter, my mom perfected the recipe and . . . voila!

Serves 4

½ cup (120 ml) rice
4 cups (1 liter) whole milk
10–12 tsp (50–60 ml) white sugar, to taste
2 tsp (10 ml) orange blossom
2–4 tbsp (12–20 ml) corn flour

Garnish Topping Choices
8 pieces goji berries, chopped
Pistachios, crushed to bits, with chopped peanuts
Sprinkled cinnamon powder, to taste
Coconut shreds and cherry, to taste

1. Rinse the rice in cold water for 30 minutes and dry it.
2. In a medium saucepan, boil the milk with sugar, rice on low heat for 15 minutes while stirring continuously, until rice softens.
3. As the rice softens, add the orange blossom and add 2 tbsp of the corn flour. Stir in and bring it to a boil. Stir for another 5 minutes, or until the pudding thickens and gains the consistency of yogurt. Should the pudding still be watery, add 1 or 2 more tbsp of corn flour and cook more for a pudding consistency.
4. As the pudding thickens, pour in your heat-resistant serving cups/bowls and let it rest for a few minutes before garnishing it with your choice of garnish, as desired. Be sure to refrigerate. Serve cold.



HANNAH RASEKH, Fashion Beauty Entrepreneur
Origin Nablus / Residence London / @hannah_rasekh

Hannah has become one of the most recognized fashion and beauty influencers in the Middle East, providing a sense of style which is sleek and modern. She can often be found in front of the camera and collaborating with the world's most international brands.

Hannah's Harriseh Cake

When I am not traveling for collaboration work, I am at home spending time with my family, where Palestinian cuisine is celebrated. I grew up around this traditional mouthwatering Palestinian dessert, and the scent of the boiling sugar reminds me of my rich Nablus heritage, which I take with me wherever I go.

Serves 8

3 cups (750 grams) semolina
¾ cup (180 ml) unsweetened butter
¾ cup (180 ml) sugar
1 cup (250 grams) plain yogurt
1½ tsp (7.5 ml) baking soda
½ cup (120 ml) pistachios
2 tbsp (30 ml) tahini
½ cup almonds

For the Syrup
4 cups (1 liter) white sugar
3 cups (750 ml) water
Juiced ¼ lemon
1 tsp (5 ml) orange blossom water

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. In a large bowl, mix the semolina, butter, and sugar.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the yogurt and the baking soda. Wait a few minutes until the yogurt doubles in size. When the yogurt has doubled, pour the yogurt mixture on top of the semolina mix. Use your hands to mix.
4. After you combine the two batches, grease a small jelly roll pan or a 9×13" glass baking dish with the tahini and then spread the mix until it's 1 inch thick.
5. Cut a diamond or square design in the cake mix using a butter knife. Top each square or diamond with a almond (optional). Bake in preheated oven for 40-45 minutes, until the cake is a golden brown color.
6. Make the syrup. Mix the sugar, water, and lemon juice in a sauce pan on high heat until it boils. Then reduce the heat to medium for 5-10 minutes until the syrup coats a metal spoon. Once cool, add the orange blossom water.
7. Once baked, pour cold syrup on top while the cake is still hot so it can absorb all the way through. Use the pistachios to garnish by sprinkling a little on top of each square.

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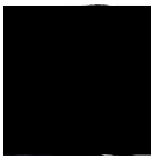


WALEED ZUATER, Actor, Producer
Original Hails from Nablus / Resides in Los Angeles / @waleedzuater

Waleed is an actor and producer, starred in Omar, which was an Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film representing Palestine in 2014. Other movies include London Has Fallen and starring opposite Sasha Baron Cohen in Netflix's series, The Spy. Waleed is currently starring in the lead as inspector Moshin Al-Kafi in the Iraqi set thriller Baghdad Central. He is the proud father to Zaha and Nur and married to his high school sweetheart and confidante.

Knafeh Nabulsi

This is the recipe of my father, Farouq Zuater Kafeh Nabulsi, which is my favorite. My father uses mozzarella cheese because it's harder to find Nabulsi cheese worldwide, but makes for a perfect substitution. My father made this easy-to-bake knafeh, which he considered "healthier" than the original.

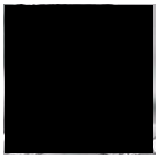
Serves 6

For the Syrup
2½ cups (600 grams) granulated sugar
1¼ cups (300 grams) water
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
1 tbsp (15 ml) rose water

For the Cheese Filling
1 lb (500 grams) mozzarella cheese, shredded into small pieces
3 tbsp (50 grams) granulated sugar
2 tsp (10 ml) orange blossom water
1 tsp (5 ml) rose water

For the Crust
1 lb (500 grams) kataifi pastry (thawed slightly if frozen)
1 cup (225 grams) butter, melted and slightly cooled

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Grease a round baking pan with butter.
2. Make the syrup. In a medium saucepan over high heat, combine sugar, water, and lemon juice until melted. Reduce heat and leave to simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir in orange and rose waters. Remove from pan and let cool in a medium bowl.
4. Make the cheese filling. In a medium bowl, mix the shredded mozzarella cheese with the sugar, orange blossom, and rose waters. Set aside.
5. On a large bowl, shred kataifi dough in long pieces. Pour butter over the kataifi and mix to coat well. Transfer over half of the dough in the greased pan and firmly press to cover the entire base of the pan. Pack it tightly.
6. Pour and spread cheese mix over the dough. Cover with the remainder of the dough evenly.
7. Bake in the preheated oven 45-60 minutes or until the top and sides look golden brown.
8. Remove from oven and immediately pour ¾ of the prepared syrup all around the knafeh (save the rest for drizzling later). Let it rest for 10 minutes.
9. Place your flat plate over the pan and flip over the knafeh onto the plate. Garnish with crushed pistachios and syrup.



MAYSON ZAID, Canadian Producer, Tap Dancer, Disability Advocate
Original Hometown / Residence: New Jersey / @maysonzaid

Mayson Zaid is a comedian, producer, tap dancer, disability advocate, and founder of the New York Arab American Comedy Festival, which combats stereotypes of Muslims and Arab Americans through humor. Mayson is well-known for his viral video "I got 99 problems, palsy is just one," which has accrued over 10 million views to date. She started in the World Trade Center Hospital. Mayson spent three months a year in Palestine running arts programs for displaced orphaned children in refugee camps.

Ribhia's Cookies

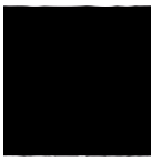
Mom's cookies are the only recipe I have ever successfully baked, a recipe card she brought with her to New Jersey from Palestine, so I wanted to share it with the rest of the world as a delicious treat with tea or coffee.

Makes 2 dozen cookies

1 stick of melted butter (no substitute)
1 cup (.25 liters) fine sugar
3 whole eggs
1 tsp (5 ml) non-alcoholic vanilla extract
3 cups (.75 liters) flour
½ tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
A pinch of salt

Garnish as desired
Almonds
Pistachio pieces
Crushed pistachio
Chocolate or jam filling
Sprinkles
Shredded coconut
Powdered sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Melt butter in a mixing bowl. Stir in fine sugar. Add the eggs, vanilla, and a pinch of salt. Mix these ingredients together until your batter is no longer lumpy.
3. Add the flour and baking powder.
4. Knead the dough with your hands until it is good to roll and does not stick to your hands or the cutting board. Roll out the dough and use cookie cutters to create any shape your heart desires. Feel free to add sprinkles, googly eyes, or glitter.
5. Bake in the preheated oven for 30-40 minutes, until the cookies are a golden brown.
6. Let them cool and garnish as desired with shaved almonds, pistachios, shredded coconut, powdered sugar, jam or chocolate filling, sprinkles.



MALAK MATTAR, Artist
Origin: Gaza / Residence: Istanbul / @malak_mattar_artist

Malak Mattar is an artist from Gaza who paints powerful expressionist faces, figures, and abstract designs. She first started painting at age 13, during the 51-day Israeli military assault on Gaza in 2014. Forced to stay inside for her own safety, she felt a compelling need to release all of her negative energy—fear, anxiety, and shelter—through her work. Her work is based on deep empathy and dedication to war refugees. She already has exhibited her work around the world, including exhibitions organized by Women in War in France.

Orange Cake

My orange cake recipe was originally inspired by my mother, who always made it when I was young. I enjoyed the time where I could help my mother mix and peel oranges.

Serves 6

For the Cake Mix
1¼ cups (315 milliliters) flour
1 cup (250 milliliters) white sugar
2 tsp (10 milliliters) baking powder
¼ tsp (2.5 milliliters) baking soda
¼ tsp (1 milliliter) salt
¾ cup (180 milliliters) orange juice

For the Pudding Mix
½ cup (120 milliliters) sugar
¼ cup (60 milliliters) cornstarch
¼ cup (60 milliliters) milk powder
1 zest of large lemon
¾ cup (180 milliliters) orange juice
½ cup (120 milliliters) vegetable oil
4 medium eggs
1 tsp (5 milliliters) lemon extract
⅔ cup (80 milliliters) orange juice
⅔ cup (150 milliliters) white sugar
¼ cup (60 milliliters) butter

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C). Grease a 10-inch Bundt pan.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together the cake mixing ingredients.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the pudding ingredients.
4. In a large bowl, stir together the cake mix and pudding mix. Make a well in the center and pour in ¾ cup orange juice, oil, eggs, and lemon extract. Beat on low speed until blended. Scrape bowl, and beat 4 minutes on medium speed. Pour batter into prepared pan.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 50–60 minutes, until done in center. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack and cool completely.
6. In a saucepan over medium heat, cook ⅔ cup (80 milliliters) orange juice, ⅔ cup (80 milliliters) sugar, and 1 tsp (5 milliliters) butter for two minutes. Drizzle over cake.

FARIDA ALGHARAIBEH, Food Blogger, Photographer
Originally from Jordan / Resident of Kuwait City / @farids_kitchen
Farida Alghariaibeh is a food blogger and photographer residing in Kuwait.

Figs Cheesecake

After a long summer season of enjoying delicious sweet figs, I decided to create a modern recipe combining figs with my family's favorite dessert cheesecake. Its sweet depth of flavor works absolutely brilliantly with the crunchy earthy taste of walnuts.

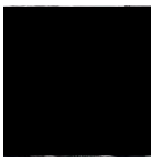
Serves 8-10

For the Crust
- ½ lb (250 g) digestive biscuits
- 1-2 tbsp (15-30 ml) granulated sugar
- 10 oz (300 g) unsalted butter, melted
- Pinch of cinnamon

For the Filling
- 1 1/3 lbs (600 g) full fat cream cheese, room temperature
- 1¼ cups (315 g) granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, slightly beaten
- 0.5 liters (250 g) sour cream, room temperature
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
- Squeezed ½ lemon

For the Topping
- 7 oz (200 g) fresh figs, washed, patted dry and divided into wedges
- Honey (drizzle)
- 3.5 oz (100 g) coarsely crushed walnuts (optional)
- 2 oz (50 g) finely crushed pistachios (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C). Grease a 9-inch pan with melted butter and thoroughly mix together with the crushed biscuits. Press mixture into pan, pressing firmly into bottom and up the sides to the edges. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. Wipe the butter and press sides of the pan with foil and set aside while cooling.
2. Make the filling: Using a stand or hand mixer, beat the cream cheese on low until light and fluffy. Add sugar a little at a time and beat until creamy. Add eggs one at a time, beating until smooth after each egg is added. Add vanilla and lemon juice, mix well. Add sour cream and beat well. Finally, fold in by hand the room temperature bubbles from the filling.
3. Pour the cheesecake filling into the pan above the cooled crust, shaking the pan to ensure that the filling is evenly distributed. Cook in the oven's middle rack for 70 minutes or until firm at 300°F (150°C). Turn off the oven, but leave the cheesecake in the oven with its door propped open for 1 hour to cool.
4. Remove cheesecake from oven. Let cool at room temperature completely on the counter top, then transfer it to the refrigerator to chill for at least 12 hours (best if overnight).
5. Time of serving: Bring cheesecake to room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Release the cheesecake carefully from the pan, place on a serving plate, decorate as desired with figs, drizzle with honey. Sprinkle with crushed walnuts or pistachios if desired.



HALA JAWHARIYEH, PhD, Education Consultant, Unesco
Original from Jaffa / Resident of Paris / @halajawhariyeh

Dr. Hala Jawhariyeh has worked and advised on international and international level strategic projects related to higher education, university administration, project development, and implementation with specific focus on the Middle East and North Africa region. She has over 20 years' experience in international higher education, public administration, and development. Dr. Jawhariyeh is the co-founder and president of the University of the Middle East Project, a 501(c)(3) institution based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Burbara Wheat Porridge

We grew up eating burbara every winter. I remember clearly the amazing smells that brought so much warmth and sweetness to the cold winter of the Ramallah and Jerusalem mountains. Cooking this amazing barley dish is a tradition that is taken from Saint Barbara, a saint who disguised herself to escape the Romans who were persecuting her by hiding in wheat fields in Palestine. This feast is still celebrated by all Christians in Palestine. The tradition is to cook for your neighbors and distribute to each one of them, regardless of their faith and religion. This is a true feast of love and sharing.

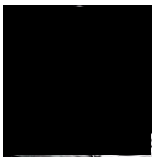
Serves 4

2 cups (.5 liters) uncooked barley pearls
6–8 cups (1.5–2 liters) water
2 tsp (10 ml) cinnamon
4 tsp (20 ml) anise powder
2 tsp (10 ml) fennel powder
5–6 tbsp (75–90 ml) honey
Raisins (small cup)

Toppings and decoration
Pine nuts
Walnuts
Raisins
Dried apricots
Pomegranate seeds
Palestinian fennel candy bits

1. Soak the barley overnight. The next day, rinse it and put it in a large pot, covering it with water. Heat on high heat until it boils, then lower the heat and cook for 3 minutes.
2. Add the cinnamon, anise powder, fennel, and raisins and stir. Add the honey.
3. Simmer for 3–4 minutes and serve it hot (or warm) in individual small cups. Decorate with the toppings, nuts and raisins.

Note: Can reduce or add more water during cooking time, as necessary, depending on your preferred consistency.



MOHAMMAD ALI
Original Hail, Lodi Resident New York City / @mamoe

We grew up in a family of nine children in Lahal ATajin Amman, next to the Jabal Al Hussein refugee camp in the old Al Wehdat, where my mother was raised. As a child I was always looking for ways to get my hands on sweets, and my mother used to prepare a simple tahini bread sandwich, filled with tahini and sugar. This has been my favorite treat to this day.

Tahini Crème Brûlée

Serves 4–6

Nigella and Black Sesame Tuile
1 oz (30 g) black sesame seeds
1 tbsp (15 ml) unsalted butter, melted
1 tsp (5 ml) tahini, room temperature
2 oz (60 g) powdered caster sugar
1 oz (30 g) all-purpose flour
2 tbsp (20 ml) fresh orange juice
1 tbsp (15 ml) nigella seeds, for garnish

For the Crème Brûlée
4 egg yolks
1 cup (250 liters) heavy whipping cream
6 tsp (30 ml) brown sugar
1 cup (250 liters) tahini
¾ cup (80 ml) white sugar
4 tbsp (60 ml) honey

Equipment
Kitchen torch

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Grind sesame seeds and nigella seeds to a fine consistency and whisk ground sesame seeds with powdered caster sugar and flour.
3. In a separate bowl, stir melted butter and tahini until well combined.
4. Stir orange juice into the dry mixture of sesame seeds, sugar, and flour. Then combine with wet ingredients (melted butter and tahini). Stir until it becomes smooth batter. Cover and let it rest in the fridge for 30 minutes.
5. Spread the batter onto the baking tray in an even, thin layer.
6. Bake for 8–10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool. Let dry at room temperature until crispy, to be used later.
7. Make the crème brûlée: In a separate bowl, mix the tahini, white sugar, and honey well.
8. In a mixing bowl, whisk the yolks with a fork or a whisk until they are creamy, approximately 1–2 minutes.
9. Stir the tahini, white sugar, and honey mixture into the egg yolks and whisk together.
10. In a small pot, heat up the cream on medium to low heat until it is hot. Watch this carefully and keep stirring the cream so it doesn't burn on the bottom of the pot.
11. Once the cream is hot, slowly add it into the tahini-egg mixture (approximately ½ to 1 cup at a time). Keep stirring the egg mixture while you pour to prevent the eggs from cooking from the heat.
12. Once all the cream has been well mixed into the tahini-egg mixture, add it all back into the pot and cook it over the stove on low heat. Stir very

important to continue stirring the mixture over the heat to avoid making scrambled eggs. Keep the custard mixture moving around the bottom of the pot. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to remove any lumps. You will know the custard is done when the custard is thick enough to coat the back of your spoon.

13. Once it is at the right consistency, turn off the heat and remove it from the stove immediately. Overcooking the mixture will cause an egg-flavored crème brûlée.

14. Pour the mixture into small dessert bowls that are resistant to the flame from the torch (preheat your oven to 350°F if using them) and refrigerate them for a minimum of 1 hour.

15. When you are ready to serve, remove them from the fridge, sprinkle evenly with 1 tsp of brown sugar on top of each bowl and use a kitchen torch to melt the sugar until golden brown. Garnish with the pieces of sea urchin and serve right away.

LAILAH HADDAD, Journalist, Author
Original Gaza City / Residence Clarksville / @gazamom

Knafeh Arabiya

Knafeh Arabiya is difficult to find outside of Gaza, so one of my proudest accomplishments is having developed this recipe for the home cook so we can enjoy this delicious dessert year-round.

Serves 12-14

½ cup (120 ml) melted butter
½ cup (60 g) cashews or other neutral-tasting oil
1 cup (250 liters) coarse semolina
1 cup (250 liters) medium-size bulgur
2 cups (500 liters) boiling water, as needed
2 tbsp (30 ml) flour
2 tbsp (30 ml) ground cinnamon
¼ tsp (1 ml) ground nutmeg
1 cup (250 liters) sugar
1 tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
¼ cup (60 ml) powdered milk
2-3 cups (500-750 liters) walnut halves

Qatir Sugar Syrup
2 cups (500 liters) sugar
1½ cups (375 liters) water
1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice

For the Garnish
¼ cup (60 ml) pine nuts
2 tbsp (30 ml) crushed raw pistachios

1. In a glass bowl, combine the melted butter, cashews, semolina, and bulgur, rubbing the mixture between hands so that the semolina fully absorbs the fats. Set aside at least 1 hour.

2. Gently pour the boiling water over the bulgur and set it aside for about 30 minutes, covered. Drain in a sieve, pressing down with a spoon to remove excess moisture or squeezing out excess moisture by hand.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C) degrees.

4. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, spices, sugar, baking powder, and powdered milk. Fold the mixture into the semolina mixture. Next, very gently stir in well-drained bulgur until just combined, using hands to break lumps apart.

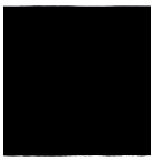
5. Grease a large 12-inch (30 cm) tray with butter or ghee. Divide the kunafa dough into two parts, one-third the size of the other. Spread the larger part evenly on the bottom of the pan with your hand.

6. Top this with a single, even layer of walnut halves. Spread the remaining dough on top of this, patting down firmly with the palm of your hand. Place pan in oven and bake for approximately 40 minutes.

7. Increase temperature to 400°F (200°C) and bake for an additional 10 minutes until browned from the edges. Remove from oven and carefully invert onto a large serving tray (place the large tray directly on top of the hot pan, hold firmly with oven mitts, and flip upside down).

8. Pour the cold syrup over the whole pastry and cover for 5 minutes. Uncover the kunafa and set it aside to rest for at least 1 hour. Cut into even squares, and decorate each square with pine nuts and pistachios.

9. Boil the sugar, water, and lemon juice vigorously on medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Reduce heat and simmer another 5 minutes until the syrup forms a continuous stream when poured from a spoon. Set aside until completely cool.



DANA EIDAT, Architect, Planner
Originally from Ramallah / @danaeidat

Dana Eidat is a Palestinian-American architect and planner who served as the senior advisor to the minister of planning in Palestine, and has consulted with the World Bank, the Welfare Association, and most recently the Palestinian Museum. She is the author of several publications on international development and urban planning. Dana's photography series, Borders Crossing Roots, has been exhibited globally

Palestinian Melange Cake

Serves 6-8

1 large Jericho orange
1 lemon
1 cup (250 grams) almonds
1 cup (250 grams) flour
1 tbsp (15 ml) baking powder
4 medium eggs
½ tsp (2 ml) salt
1 cup (250 grams) sugar
2 ½ cup (150 grams) extra-virgin olive oil (preferably Palestinian)

For the Greasing
1 tbsp (15 ml) tahini
1 tbsp (15 ml) flour

For the Garnish (optional)
Sweetened almonds
3 lbs (1.5 kg) dark chocolate
1 cup (250 grams) heavy cream

1 Boil about 6 cups of water in a pot. Place orange and lemon in the boiling water on low heat and let simmer covered for 30 minutes.

2 Preheat oven to 325°F (160°C). Bake whole almonds on a baking sheet in the oven until golden (about 10 minutes). Remove from oven and let them cool. Increase temperature to 350°F (180°C). Once almonds are cool to the touch, place in a food processor or spice grinder and grind until fine. Set aside.

3 Once the orange and lemon are very soft, remove from hot water with strainer and wash in cold water. Let cool for about 10 minutes. Cut the orange and lemons in quarters and remove the seeds, leaving the pulp and peel intact. Place the lemon and orange quarters in the same food processor and grind until they mix and form into a thick paste. Set aside.

4 Grease bottom and all sides of a 9-inch cake pan with 1 tbsp tahini, then sprinkle 1 tbsp flour.

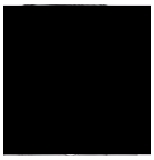
5 Sift 1 cup of flour and baking powder into a bowl. Add salt and mix. Beat in the eggs one at a time just until incorporated.

6 Add ground almonds, citrus paste, and olive oil and beat on low speed until fully incorporated.

7 Pour the batter in the prepared cake pan, place the rack in the oven in the middle, and bake for about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

8 Set the cake aside to cool, while it is still in the cake pan. Once the cake is room temperature, invert onto a serving plate.

9 Heat ½ cup of heavy cream in a sauce pan. Once cream begins to boil, add broken pieces of the dark chocolate and stir constantly until chocolate is completely melted and chocolate glaze is formed. Pour chocolate glaze on the cake and serve on the side.



LAMA BAZZARI, Entrepreneur, Philanthropist
Originally from Nablus / Resident in Dubai / @lamabazzari

Named to Forbes' Middle East's Most Powerful List for three consecutive years, Lama combines her entrepreneurial acumen with her passion for social philanthropy. She advocates for causes close to her heart, including mentoring budding entrepreneurs, and works to spur job creation and inspire entrepreneurship across the Middle East.

Mhalabia Milk Pudding

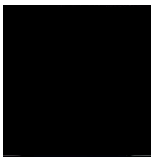
Growing up, this delicious creamy milk pudding was a treat I looked forward to and one of my favorite desserts that my mom, Ayshe Bazzari, regularly prepared. It always takes me back to fond childhood memories. I love drinking it hot, straight off the stove, sprinkled with cinnamon, as much as I enjoy it as a cold dessert.

Serves 6

4 cups (1 liter) whole milk
2-3 tbsp (10-20 ml) cornflour/starch
10-12 tbsp (50-60 ml) white sugar
2 tsp (10 ml) orange blossom

For the Garnish
2 tbsp (10 ml) crushed pistachios, cinnamon powder, or shredded coconut

1. Combine ¾ cup of the milk and cornstarch in a bowl and stir until smooth.
2. Pour remaining milk into a large pot and stir in sugar. Bring to a boil on medium heat, stirring regularly until sugar is fully dissolved. Whisk in cornstarch mixture and simmer on low heat until thickened, about 10 to 15 minutes. Add the orange blossom. You will notice the milk texture thicken. Continue to stir until the mixture resembles a thick custard.
3. Be careful during this stage that the milk doesn't burn, and be sure not to scrape the bottom of the pan as you are regularly stirring. When the mixture thickens like a cake batter, turn off the heat.
4. Pour milk mixture into 4 ramekins, cover, and cool to room temperature. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours. It will thicken when cold. If you are going to chill it overnight, cover the cups/dishes with cling film or saucers to prevent the mhalabia from absorbing any smells and to stop the surface from becoming dry.
5. Sprinkle each serving with choice of garnish.



OMAR SARTAWI, Food Artist, Restaurateur
Origin Sata, Nablus / Residence Amman / @omar_sartawi

Saying Omar Sartawi is not your ordinary chef is beyond an understatement. The rowdy and Palestinian cook initially started his career in the field of construction, following studies in design and engineering. Omar returned to his home country, where he established a design house while nurturing his long-standing passion for cooking. There he opened his first restaurant, inspired by his mom's and grandmother's cooking. Omar takes pleasure in blurring the lines between design, art, and cooking, seeing himself as a "food artist" more than just a chef, with his artistic food creations taking the local food scene by storm.

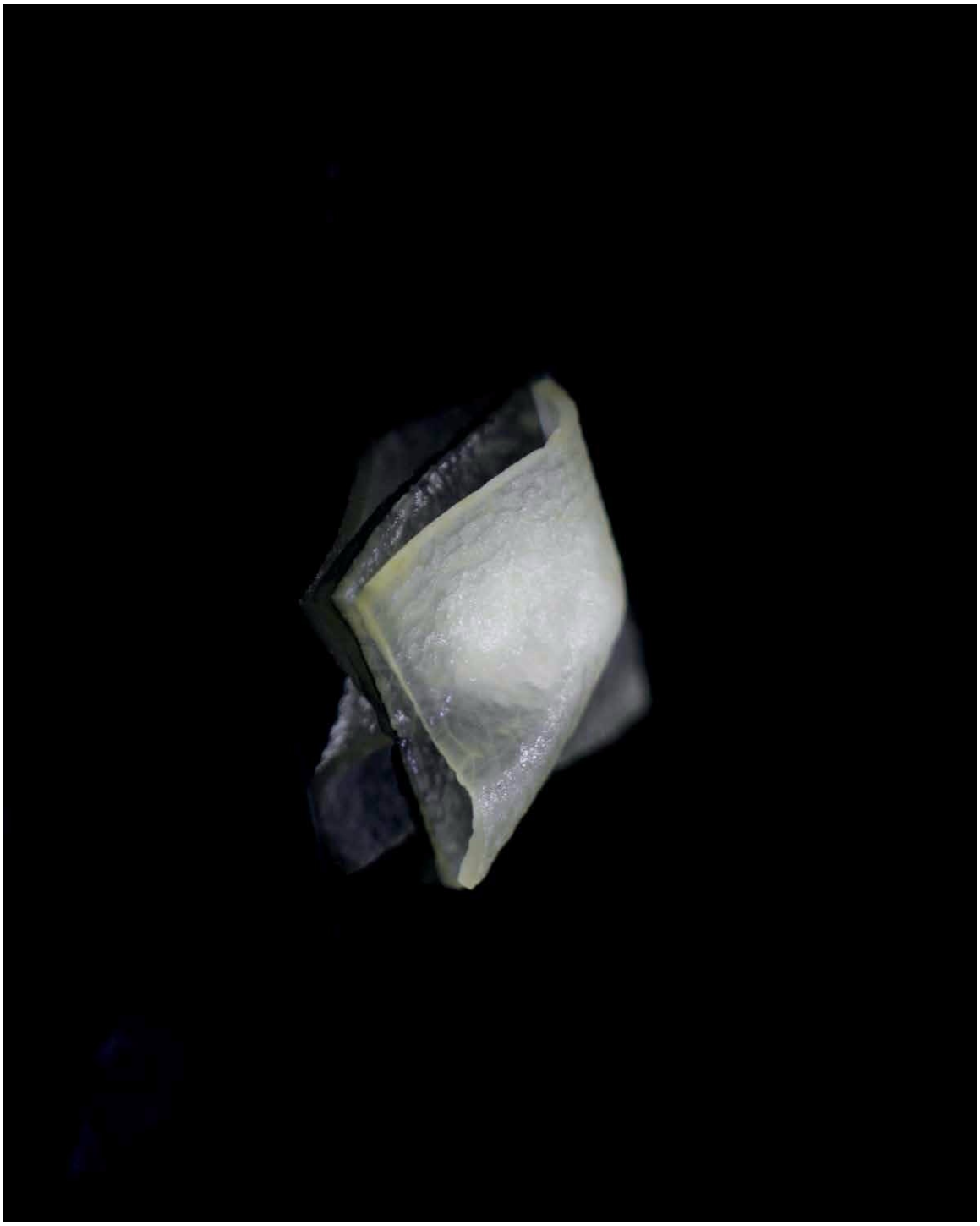
Palestinian Millefeuille

The dish is a play on traditional summer watermelon and white cheese done with watermelon rinds and white cheese mousse. It's a fun dish to serve at parties and special occasions.

Serves 2

Watermelon rinds
1 cup (250 liters) sugar
4 cups (1 liter) water
½ lb (200 g) white Nabulsi cheese (can substitute with other salty cheese)
6 tbsp (100 ml) water

1. Slice rinds as thinly as possible (approximately ¼ inch) and cut into squares.
2. Dissolve the sugar in 4 cups water and heat until boils and all sugar is dissolved.
3. Then add the watermelon rinds squares or enough that in the syrup for 2 hours until the rind has become transparent but still has a bite to it.
4. Cool down fast in the syrup by purging the pot in ice bath (a bowl filled with water and ice) and set aside.
5. For the cheese mousse, blend the cheese in a blender with 6 tbsp water until you have a smooth consistency (you can add more water depending on the cheese you are using).
6. To plate, lay down a square of rind and then pipe a little bit of cheese mousse on top. Top with another square of rind.



The Palestinian Pantry

Palestinian pantries overflow with flavors and aromas from our local terrior and civilizations that passed through it. Al-Mouneh in Arabic means the produce that we store in season be used for the rest of the year. Here is an essentials list of produce.

Spices and Herbs

ANISEED (CARAWAY) Caraway has a very distinct licorice, fennel-like flavor. The small seeds of a flowering plant, it is mostly used in desserts and tea, adding a distinct flavor. It is one of the world's oldest spices and has many medicinal purposes.

BAHARAT, ALL SPICE MIX (7 SPICE MIX) An essential spice blend that has a highly aromatic flavor, it is used as a marinade for meats and used in many Palestinian dishes as a dominant spice. It can be bought at any middle eastern retailer or prepared at home.

CARDAMOM Known as hail in Arabic, this spice is predominately used in Arabic coffee and gives it the unique, delicious flavor. Green cardamom pods are used to flavor rice and stew dishes.

CUMIN A spice that adds a distinct smoky, earthy fragrance to onion-based Palestinian dishes, as well as to Sayadiyeh, a popular Palestinian seafood dish. It is also used in teas as a soothing ailment.

DUQQA Widely used in Gaza, this delicious variation to za'atar is a mix blend made of chickpeas, wheat, caraway, sumac, dill, and red pepper flakes, all of which are ground to a fine powder and mixed with sesame seeds. Variations to this blend include dried thyme and dried mint.

FENUGREEK An ancient herb, its seeds originated in Iraq and are used as an herb and a spice seasoning for rice and meat dishes. It has a slightly sweet, nutty flavor.

GROUND CORIANDER Coriander grows wild in many regions and evidence suggests that it originated in the Middle East. Though the fresh leaves and dried seeds are most typically used in cooking stews and as garnish for many Palestinian dishes, it's even added into salads.

MAHLAB This spice of Middle East origin, is made from the seeds of the Mahaleb or St. Lucie cherry. The seeds are extracted from the cherry pits and ground to a powder and used to enhance flavor in sweets and desserts.

MASTIC This is a resin from the hardened sap of a tree. It forms in pea-like drops similar to tears with a crystalline texture. It is used in the famous Palestinian chewing gum and in many Palestinian sweets, breads, pastries, and ice cream.

SAFFRON Saffron comes from the saffron crocus flower. Saffron is mainly used as a seasoning and coloring agent in rice dishes, including Makloubi and Qidra.

SUMAC Originated in the Middle East, this is a red/ purplish-red powdered spice made from the berries and, occasionally, the leaves of the Sumac bush. It is used in the famous national dish M'sakhan, and as a souring agent for

meats, stews, and salad dressings.

TURMERIC This spice is found in many dishes, mostly meat and vegetable recipes. It is only used in ground form and has a bitter, medium flavor. Turmeric lends some color and earthy flavor to a Middle Eastern classic.

Grains and Rice

BULGUR WHEAT This is a crack dried wheat and a staple grain in Palestinian salads, pilafs, and bakes. It comes in various coarseness: extremely fine, medium, and coarse.

CHICKPEAS This is a staple Palestinian ingredient in fattehs and in stews, and is the base for hummus.

FREEKEH Widely used in Palestinian dishes as a staple ingredient, freekeh is a cracked wheat that can be used as a delicious, nutritionally packed substitute to rice or as a stuffing for grapeleaves and in a hearty soup or salads.

LENTIL Lentil is another staple Palestinian ingredient in soups and stews, cooked with rice or bulgur in pilafs, such as Mujadarra. It is also combined into salads.

MAFTOOL Our very own Palestinian couscous, this whole wheat our rolled around grains of bulgur are delicious and a great substitute for rice. It is generally cooked with chicken and in stews. It is also a great addition to any salad.

VERMICELLI NESTS (SHA'RIYEH) This is a type of pasta commonly cooked with rice that accompanies most Palestinian stews and adds a nutty flavor to rice, as the Vermicelli is toasted and then boiled with the rice.

Stocks, Oils and Syrups

CHICKEN, MEAT STOCK These are base liquids to cook many Palestinian stews, bakes, and traditional dishes such as grapeleaves, koosa, and maklouba. Stock can be pre-packed or prepared from scratch and cooked with chicken, meat, or lamb that enhances the flavor of any dish

OLIVE OIL Palestinian olive oil is a key ingredient across all Palestinian dishes, including in salads. Olive trees in Palestine are hundreds of years old and are handpicked, with the olives pressed only on the day of harvest, giving them a distinct flavor.

ORANGE BLOSSOM WATER, ROSE WATER Orange Blossom water is a diluted water infused with fresh orange blossoms and rose water is a perfumed liquid. Both are commonly used in Palestinian desserts to enhance flavor.

POMEGRANATE MOLASSES This is a delicious sticky, sour, tangy syrup made from pomegranate juice thickened into a dark liquid and is used in salad dressings, stews, and meats.

SAMNEH (GHEE) Clarified butter, called samneh (ghee) in Arabic, provides a distinctive taste to Arabic sweets and savory dishes. It's commonly used in sweets, such as baklawa, kunafeh, harisseh, and cookied. It is also used in hot grain, soup, and meat stews.

SUGAR SYRUP A sugar-based syrup used as a sweetener over many Palestinian desserts. It can be flavored with rose or blossom water and served hot or cold, as per the dessert type.

TAHINI This is a very popular Palestinian paste, sauce that can be used as a base in salads, as a spread on sandwiches, or as a dip accompanying falafel or fritters. Tahini is also commonly used to cook Kofta and fish.

Herbs and Greens

VINE LEAVES Used fresh off the vine and

harvested in Palestine, these delicious leaves of grapes are extremely flavorful when fresh and stuffed with meat, rice, vegetables, or even freekeh. They are available year-round in jars and can be bought from any Middle Eastern supermarket.

MARAMIYA - SAGE Maramiya, also known as sage, is a medicinal plant commonly used in a very popular tea and also to relief an upset stomach and has many other medical benefits.

MINT Fresh mint is grown commonly at every Palestinian home and is used in fresh mint tea and in salads and has medical benefits in aiding digestion. It is also used for meats, vegetables, rice, and stuffed vine leaves and in soups and yogurt-based dishes.

MLOUKHIA A spinach-like green leaf that is a staple Palestinian ingredient in Mloukhia stew. Fresh mloukhia is seasonal but can be substituted for a frozen version.

ZA'ATAR This is the most famous Palestinian ingredient used across many Palestinian dishes as an herb and as a spice mix

Dairy

LABAN JAMEED (DRIED YOGURT) This sauce is a base for many Palestinian lamb and yogurt rice stews and is made from kishek or jameed, which are round blocks of dried fermented sheep yogurt.

LABANEH A creamy yogurt that has been strained to remove its whey, it is eaten as a spread in sandwiches or as a dip with Palestinian olives and za'atar.

Breads

KA'EK AL QUDS Street vendors sell Ka'ak Al Quds (Jerusalem bread) on the streets of the old city of Jerusalem. It is a delicious breakfast treat sprinkled with za'atar or dipped in olive oil.

KMAJ (PITA) BREAD A traditional Palestinian bread similar to pita, commonly baked at home.

TABOON BREAD A staple bread that is traditionally baked on a bed of small, hot stones in the taboon oven by Palestinian women across villages.

Stockist

Below are our picks for stockiest of Palestinian and Middle Eastern essentials.

North America/Canada

ADONIS SUPERMARKETS
https://www.groupeadonis.ca

North America/USA

CANAAN FAIR TRADE
https://www.canaanusa.com

Europe/United Kingdom

ZAYTOON CIC
www.zaytoun.org

Europe/France

DELICES D'ORIENT
52 Avenue Emile Zola, 75015 Paris, France.

Europe/Germany

MOZZAIK
https://www.mozzaik.shop/en/

Australia

ZAFFRON GROCERY
www.zaffrongrocery.com.au

Visit cravingpalestine.com for additional stockist list.

Cooking Guidelines

Some recipes may include ingredients or other ingredients that cause allergic reactions known to certain individuals and should be avoided or replaced as necessary. Use discretion in quantity used of oils, salt, pepper, spices or any other ingredient, depending on your personal preferences, taste, or dietary plan. Most of these recipes are easily adapted when baking especially vegetables for a healthier option.

Visit Palestine

A trip to Palestine should be on everyone's destination list, should you be a foodie, an art enthusiast, or an avid history buff. A trip is incomplete without immersing yourself in the rich and diverse food and fresh produce on offer. From the charming hole-in-the-walls that serve traditional favorites to well-known family-run institutions, you will enjoy sampling great food and meeting interesting Palestinians, including farmers and food artisans.

Markets and Factories

Visiting the souks, old traditional markets, to browse and sample fresh produce and delicious seasonal fruits. Be sure to converse with the local sellers; they tend to be farmers, coming from far away, to sell their fresh produce as their source of income.

BIRZEIT A must-visit is the Palestine Museum for a dose of history and arts. Stroll through the museum's award-winning garden.

GAZA Be sure to pop into any of the women's cooperatives, like Bint Al-Reef, to get a taste of the way they process food items, like date paste, date molasses, date jam, dukka, and shatta. Also, visit one of the oldest running tahini factories in Gaza to get a taste of the roasted rust-colored variety (red tahini) most commonly used here.

HEBRON Be sure to stop by Halkoum producers and taste the sweet fragrance of flower delights. For original, Palestinian famous Keffiyeh scarves, visit the Hirbawi Textile Factory.

JENIN Visit Canaan Fair Trade for beautiful olive oil and the delicious freekeh and be sure to meet and converse with the farmers, the backbone of our Palestinian food supply chain.

JERICHO Jericho's beautiful oasis feeds the rest of Palestine with wonderful agricultural produce, from that of the small date farmers to the foragers of herbs (khbeisa, huwerneh), and, of course, the bananas and the citrus fruit. Stop by any bayara (orange grove) in season and buy the fruit off the tree. Drive to the Dead Sea to discover fantastic salt produced by the West Bank Salt Company.

JERUSALEM Visit Al-Jebrini Tahina factory and immerse yourself in the old city's fruit and vegetable market and be sure to converse with the sellers and sample their produce. Visit Derma Beauty Lab, a skincare manufacturing company, focusing on ethical production and creating job opportunities for youth and women in Jerusalem.

NABLUS Arrive hungry, as you can spend a full day immersed in the old city's colorful vegetables market. Be sure to stop by the Nablus Soap Company for premium organic handmade soap and visit the plethora of family run Tahini factories for the best tahini.

RAMALLAH Pop in to taste beers and wines at Taybeh and immerse yourself in the old fruit and vegetables market.

Restaurants, Food Stores and Sweet Shops

Every Palestinian city has a few iconic places. Listing them all here is rather impossible, but we'll take a glance at every city's historic addresses.

BETHLEHEM Your first stop should be at the best falafel and hummus in town, the family-owned enterprise Afteem, located a few steps away from the Church of the Nativity. If your palate prefers mezzes, the oldest institutions in town are Abu Eli, Abu Zouz, and Abu Shanab. For a dose of refined contemporary Palestinian cuisine, visit Chef Fadi Kattan at Fawda Restaurant in Hosh Al Syrian. Be sure to pop in to Banksy's Walled Off Hotel for a dose of art.

GAZA Akeela's in Gaza's Old City, can't be beat for Gaza-style bright green falafel bursting with fresh herbs and chilis. As for the best ful, visit Khuzundar located, close to Fras Market. Other favorites in the city itself are Abo Saeed and Abu Talal. Further south, the go-to place for divine hummus and stuffed falafel is Shamout in Khan Younis. For Gaza's famous Kunafa Arabiya, head to the original Saqallah in the Jundi Majhool Square. Be sure to visit Kathem's ice cream and barrad (a local shaved yellow slushee) parlor, a landmark.

HEBRON The restaurant scene has a tradition of great Palestinian dishes, such as stuffed lamb necks, fukharah, mansaf, and ouzi. The traditional places—Abu Mazen, Zuwwar, Al-Sham, and Al-Quds—are some of the best.

JERUSALEM Historically, Jerusalem has been the Palestinian food capital. From Izhiman's coffee to the great Jerusalem ka'ek bakers in Musrara, many institutions have survived the occupation of Jerusalem and persevere in delivering highly flavorful foods. These include the old city's food dives, such as Abu Shukri for hummus and Zalatimo for the light, fluffy motabak.

JERICHO With its long tradition of being a winter spot for all families from Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, Jericho offers wonderfully fresh mezzes, grilled meats, and fresh lemonade or a glass of chilled arak in most restaurants. Visitors have the choice between the older establishments, such as the Rawda, and the newer addresses, such as Limona and Al-Bayara.

NABLUS Dive into the old city's alleyways until you spot a butcher and a baker close by and sit down and ask them for arayes. You will see the meat cut and minced in front of your eyes, stuffed into a freshly baked kmaj and grilled over charcoal. Hike to the heart of the old city and follow the delicious smell of knafeh nabulsiya being prepared. The go-to address is Al-Aqsa Sweet. Watch the artisans create fresh knafeh and enjoy the melting delicious nabulsi cheese.

RAMALLAH The choices here are many—first among them are Bandali for hummus in downtown old Ramallah, Zarour for being one of the oldest mezze and grilled meats restaurants in the city, and, of course, Rukab's for ice cream.

SEBASTIA Ask for Abu Mohamed and his restaurant for fragrant freekeh soup and a delicious musakhan. The rich olive oil and the tangy sumac make his musakhan unmissable.

TULKARM Pop in to La Maison Palestine, Palestine's best gastronomic secret, in the heart of this culturally rich and diverse city and meet one of our very own chef, Muayad Ali.

Acknowledgments

There are so many people whom I wish I could endeavor to thank in this moment. Contributing to Gaza Sky Geese has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life, and without the guidance of so many, myself included, I would never have gotten to this point.

I'd like to thank Mona Dawas and Edward Said for educating me on the power of the written word and how it has the ability, more than anything, to connect people. I also like to thank my personal superheroes and besties who constantly support me: Ms. Darley and Ms. Foster; I don't know what you see in me, but I'm so thankful for you. Thank you for always giving above and beyond and believing in me even when I don't. You mean the world to me. Thank you to my incredible cousin, Zara—the sights in Amman will never be forgotten. My beautiful sister, Leena—I love you both endlessly. Thank you for instilling in my father, and in myself in turn, the value of culture, of heritage. To my teacher, Widad Kawar, and Kamal, I love you. To all the contributors, to all those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this book what you are now holding, and thank you for bringing your dedication and skill to us. A special thanks to everyone who bought this book, attended a book launch as per our recommended visitors' guide to Palestine. To Anna, for inspiring me with her message and work, may this book touch the lives of many Palestinians and encouraging a bright future.

To my father: From a boy in Gaza with dreams of his future to a man who's self-made and dedicated example of the power of conviction, I thank you. Thank you for inspiring me with your story. For always saying Gaza with your arm over your heart and making sure it's in mine. I love you.

To my mother: I wouldn't be without you, truly. Thank you for always showing me that anything is possible if you set your mind to it, and always advocating for me when I can't. Thank you for being a shoulder to lean on, and everything I could ever ask for in another. You never fail to inspire me with your work ethic, drive, and motivation. I can only hope to be half the person you are.

Tal'a Falastin!

—Farah Awad

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We could only hope this book resonates with and inspires readers to cook our food, and learn more about Palestine and its humanitarian needs. We crave nothing more than Palestine, a homeland rooted in our existence, and may you join us in our tribute to it that preserves our food, culture, and heritage. May this book in return touch the lives of many Palestinian youth, who are deserving of a bright future.

Shukran,

—Lama Bazzari

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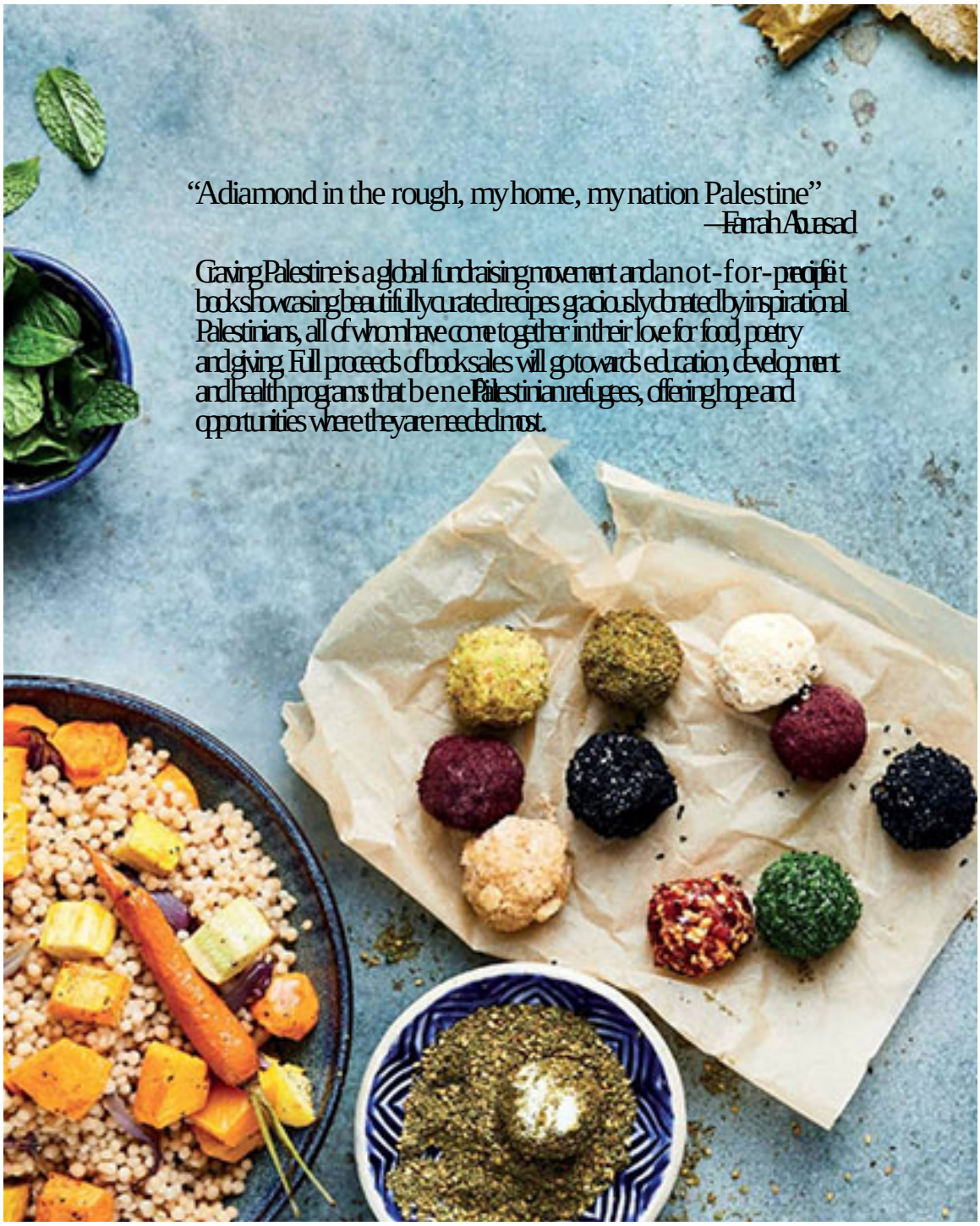
"A diamond in the rough, my home, my nation Palestine"
—Farrah Asurasad
Craving Palestine is a global fundraising movement and a not-for-profit book showcasing beautifully curated recipes graciously donated by inspirational Palestinians, all of whom have come together in their love for food, poetry and giving. Full proceeds of book sales will go towards education, development and health programs that benefit Palestinian refugees, offering hope and opportunities where they are needed most.